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A CRIME OF THE SUN.

The Strangest Means of Murder Ever Known---In the Shadows of the Noose---Love's Golden Chain.

By EMMA HOWARD WIGHT.

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CHAPTER I.

The square, gray stone house, shadowed by grand old trees, with its extensive and pretentious grounds, stood upon the outskirts of Oakdale, a little town of Waverley, a suburb of Chicago. Oak Hall was the property of Oscar Gault, a rich, old bachelor, who had lived there alone with his servants for many years.

Early one day, there had come to Oak Hall a stern, fair-haired woman, dressed in deepest weeds and accompanied by two boys aged twelve and eleven years respectively. It was soon known in the little town that the lady was a sister of Mr. Gault, whose husband having recently died and left her without means, had come to Oak Hall with her brother.

"Of course the two boys will come in for Mr. Gault's money," was the generally expressed opinion, "as they are his only living relatives."

On a May afternoon, twelve years after her arrival at Oak Hall, Mrs. Hazeltine, the sister of Mr. Gault, sat in the drawing room, gazing, with a fretful, worried expression on her fair, faded face, at her younger son, as he lay stretched languidly upon a couch near an open window.

He was a slim, young fellow with a fair, good-looking face, which already showed signs of dissipation. The dark blue eyes were sleepy and languorous, the mouth, with its two red lips, was womanish and weak. The blonde hair, which clustered in curls over his white brow, was as soft and silken as a child's.

"You will surely break my heart, Charles," his mother was saying. "You came home again last night under the influence of liquor."

"Now, how do you know, mother, that I was tipsy?" carelessly inquired the young man.

"Why, your uncle informed us of that fact at breakfast this morning," replied Mrs. Hazeltine. "You ought to know by this time," as the young man moved a little uneasily on his couch, "that Simmons has orders from Owen to inform him every time that you come home intoxicated. Oh, Charles, if the knowledge of the sorrow you are causing me will not keep you straight, then, for heaven's sake, think of how you are ruining all your prospects in life. You know well enough that Gault is your uncle's favorite, and that he will be only too glad of an excuse to leave everything to him. I know my brother too well not to be perfectly sure that he will never leave a penny of his money to a drunkard."

"Oh, come, now, mother, it's not so bad as that," cried Charles, deprecatingly.

"It soon will be, if you continue as you are doing now," said Mrs. Hazeltine.

"Oh, well, I am going to turn over a new leaf," said the young man.

"How many times have you said that, Charles?" asked his mother, despondently. "Oh, if you were only more like Gault!"

"But I am not, mother," said Charles. "Besides, it's no great credit to Gault to keep straight, for he hasn't but one passion in life---his love for Louise Abner. And what affection he can spare from her, he has bestowed upon that college chum and friend of his---John Rodney. By the way, Rodney's coming today, isn't he?"

"Yes, he will be here this afternoon," answered Mrs. Hazeltine. "Gault is going into the city to meet him."

"If Gault don't look sharp Rodney will cut him out with Louise," said Charles, with a light laugh. "Rodney is a deuced handsome fellow, and I don't believe that Louise is one bit in love with Gault."

"Then why has she promised to marry him?" asked Mrs. Hazeltine, listlessly. Charles was her favorite son, and she was much too absorbed in his unsatisfactory affairs to give any thought to her other son who had never caused her a moment's anxiety in all his life.

"Oh, I imagine she was carried right off her feet by the force of Gault's passion, and thinks she cares for him," replied Charles. "Louise is too light and shallow to really care for any one so grave and staid as old Gault."

"Gault has a very strong nature," said his mother. "He can hate as deeply as he loves, I am sure of that."

"Mary Merton, the preacher's daughter, is in love with Gault," began Charles, and then stopped abruptly as a young man entered the room.

Gault and Charles Hazeltine were as unlike as it is possible for two brothers to be. The former was rather heavily built, with dark hair and eyes, irregular, firm lips and a square, determined chin.

He had evidently overheard his brother's remark, for he frowned and a slight flush crossed his brow.

"I am going now to meet my friend, Rodney, mother," he said. "We shall be here in time for supper."

"Very well," replied Mrs. Hazeltine.

As Gault left the room, Charles laughed. "He heard what I said about Mary Merton," he said. "But he knew it well before, the girl shows it plainly enough."

"Never mind about Gault, Charles," said his mother, "I want to talk to you very seriously about yourself."

The young man lifted himself upon his elbow, bent forward and patted caressingly the slender, white hand resting upon her lap.

"Oh, come now, don't scold me any more, mammy," he murmured, coaxingly. "I've got a deuce of a headache."

She bent over him, pushing back the soft hair which fell over his brow, with loving fingers.

"Oh, my darling; you know how dearly I love you," she murmured. "Don't break my heart."

In the meanwhile Gault Hazeltine walked rapidly down the main street of the town towards the street car station. About midway in the street was a substantial red brick house, with a doctor's office attached. A flight of marble steps led up to a stone porch. There, in a low chair, reclined a pretty, auburn-haired girl, with big, brown eyes and creamy skin.

Gault Hazeltine's eyes lighted passionately at the sight of her. He ran up the steps to her side. She looked up at him, with a smile, flushing slightly as she met his impassioned gaze.

"Louise! Louise!" he cried, "do not tempt me!"

"Why, Gault, I thought your friend was coming today," she said.

"He is coming; I am on my way to meet him now," replied the young man. "You know I could not go by you, my darling, without a word," he added, in a lower voice.

The girl laughed softly.

"Tell me something about your friend," she said. "You are very much attached to him, are you not?"

"Attached to John Rodney? Yes, indeed," replied Gault Hazeltine, earnestly. "He and I were college chums and have been friends for years. He is the best fellow in the world, and he is wonderfully good looking. At college he was called 'Handsome Jack Rodney.' I shall bring him to see you, Louise."

She glanced at him demurely through her long, curling lashes.

"You must be sure to bring him," she said. "I am quite anxious to meet him."

"I must be going now," said Gault.

He leaned forward, and, screened by the purple wisteria which grew over one side of the porch, lifted her little white hand to his lips.

The girl sat watching him as he walked away, with a little meditative look in her soft, brown eyes. Charles Hazeltine was right---Louise Abner was in love with Gault. She was vain, selfish and a coquette. Gault Hazeltine's passionate love pleased her, pandered to her vanity, and, when he asked her to become his wife, she could not make up her mind to send him away. He never dreamed that her tender words, her caresses, were but the allurements of a coquette whose chief delight in life is to play with the passions she is so skilled in arousing.

A buggy stopped before the house and Dr. Abner, a middle-aged man, with gray hair and a kindly face, alighted.

"I met Gault a minute ago," said the doctor, as he came up the steps and paused beside his daughter. "He seemed to be in a hurry. It's difficult to realize that Gault and Charles Hazeltine were born of the same mother. I am sadly afraid that Charles is going to the dogs. I saw him again last night very much under the influence of liquor. If he keeps on in this way he won't stand much chance of coming in for any of his uncle's money. Owen Gault is too level-headed to run any risk of his money being squandered in drink. Gault will very likely come in for all of it."

"About how much is Mr. Gault worth, papa?" asked Louise,

The doctor laughed and pinched her pretty cheek.

"Oh, Gault won't be so badly off," he replied. "The old man's worth every cent of seventy-five thousand dollars, I imagine. Gault would get the lion's share anyway, I guess, he's his uncle's favorite."

"And Charles is his mother's favorite," remarked Louise.

"The transgressor usually are," said the doctor. "Well, I am glad I have no sons to worry over." he added, as he fondly ruffled up the girl's shining hair with his big hand. "I wonder what I could do, Lady-bird, should you run away?"

Louise shrugged her shoulders.

"Oh, I shall not do that, take me away for a long time," she replied.

"I am afraid that Gault won't listen to that," said the doctor, as he passed into the house.

Louise pouted her scarlet lips.

"We shall see," she murmured.

That evening, Louise, exceedingly pretty in a filmy white gown, with pale lavender ribbons, sat alone in the parlor when Gault Hazeltine, accompanied by his friend, entered. Louise's soft, brown eyes lingered upon the latter as Gault introduced him.

John Rodney was fully six feet in height and of magnificent physique. He had a clear olive skin, splendid dark gray eyes, silky black hair and mustache.

His very expressive eyes met Louise's soft, brown ones with an undisguised look of admiration. The evening passed with such amazing quickness that Louise was astonished when the clock struck seven and Gault rose to depart.

"I congratulate you, old fellow," said John Rodney, as the two young men walked down the street together. "Miss Abner is certainly charming."

"I am glad that you admire her," answered Gault.

"One could hardly do otherwise," said John Rodney, as he stopped to light a cigarette.

Upon reaching Oak Hall, John Rodney went on up to his room and Gault turned into the library where his uncle sat reading. Owen Gault looked very old and gray, white hair and keen, dark eyes which had not lost brightness with years.

"Ah, Gault, is that you?" he said, putting aside the paper he was reading as his nephew entered. "Where have you been this evening?"

"I took Miss Abner to call upon Louise," replied Gault.

Hughes muttered the old man. Then he added, with startling abruptness, "I don't like this friend of yours, Gault."

Gault's dark brow knit slightly.

"Why, I am sorry to hear you say that, uncle," he exclaimed. "John Rodney is my dearest friend, and I wanted you to like him."

"He is weak and insincere," said the old man, coolly, "and I would require more than little tempting to make him false and treacherous."

"Oh, uncle, I am sure your judgment is at fault and that you do John a wrong," said Gault.

"Well, well! perhaps time will prove whether my judgment is at fault or not," said Owen Gault, and the day came when Gault Hazeltine wondered at his uncle's fruitful.

As Gault passed his mother's room on his way to his own he heard her speak and Mrs. Hazeltine appeared. She wore a loose dressing gown and her face was pale and troubled.

"Stop a moment, Gault, I wish to speak to you," she said. "Charles," she continued, laying her hand on his arm, "Charles has not come home yet and he is drinking again. Won't you see Simmons and ask him not to say anything to Owen? This is the fourth time in one week that Charles has been under the influence of liquor, and Owen is sure to be angry if he hears of it. I times that I don't what he will do. Will you speak to Simmons, Gault? You have so much influence with him."

"I will, mother, but I cannot do it," answered Gault. "My uncle has instructed Simmons to inform him when Charles comes home under the influence of liquor. How can you think for a moment that I would be to cause twelve servants to disobey and deceive him. I would not be mistaken would by making a request of Simmons even had my uncle not given him such instructions. Charles must take the consequences of his folly."

Mrs. Hazeltine drew back from him, an angry flush in her face.

"I should have known it would be useless to appeal to you," she cried. "It is for your interest for Charles to lose his uncle's favor."

"I am sorry, mother, that you should put such a construction upon my refusal to accede to your request," answered Gault Hazeltine, gravely, as he passed on.

CHAPTER II.

Four weeks have passed.

John Rodney, with a quick, sure look on his handsome face, rang the bell at Doctor Abner's, and was shown into the little sitting room. Louise sat there with a dainty piece of embroidery on her lap. She looked up a soft flush deepening her cool, dusky cheeks.

John Rodney came and stood beside her chair.

"I have come to bid you goodby," he said, abruptly.

Her brown eyes dilated with dismay.

"To bid me goodby," she repeated.

"Yes," he replied. "I am going away. God knows I should have gone long ago."

She gave him a swift, tender, passionate look.

"I do not want you to go," she murmured.

"Louise, Louise!" he cried, with a groan, "don't tempt me. Do not tempt me to be false to my friend. You know that I love you, but you are his affianced wife and can be nothing to me."

She smiled.

"I shall never be Gault Hazeltine's wife," she said. "I love you, John, and shall be no man's wife but yours."

Then John Rodney forgot honor and friendship as he many a man has before him, as many a man will again when a woman tempts. Sinking on his knees beside her he clasped her in his arms and kissed her upon the lips.

A few hours later John Rodney left Oak Hall, a hot flush rose in his clear, dark eyes as Gault clasped his hand as parting, and Gault's eyes looked affectionately into his.

"I shall never clasp his hand again, never see that look in his eyes," he thought, with a pang. "I wonder if love, in the long run, will prove as sweet as friendship?"

The next morning, as Owen Gault sat in his favorite seat under a big tree on the lawn, Gault came out of the house and approached him, an open letter in his hand.

"Good news, boy, what is the matter?" exclaimed the old man, for his nephew's face was colorless to the very lips, and his eyes dark with pain and anger.

"You were right, uncle," he said, in a hoarse, strained voice, "this man I thought my friend is both false and treacherous. Read that," and he held the letter on his uncle's knee.

The old man adjusted his spectacles and took up the letter. It was written upon the paper of a Baltimore hotel and was very brief, but those words were sufficient to change Gault Hazeltine's whole life, to shatter his faith in woman's fidelity and man's friendship.

"I was married this morning, Gault, to John Rodney. I never loved you. I never knew what love meant until he came into my life. We did not want to wrong you, but what could we do when we loved each other? Try and not think too harshly of us.—Louise Rodney."

"The woman is heartless as she's false," said the old man. "Neither of them is worth a moment's pain nor regret, my boy," he added, with a sudden softening of his cold, keen eyes, as he looked up into his nephew's white face.

"You are right, sir," was the reply. "But," with a sudden light in the pale blue eyes, "I shall always remember their treachery."

The Waverley people, knowing how desperately Gault Hazeltine had been infatuated with Louise Abner, were unanimous in opinion that her desertion would go very hard with him. But Gault Hazeltine vanished quietly on the even tenor of his way, outwardly, at least, unchanged.

About a month after Louise's marriage, he was walking along a quiet country road a mile or more from town, when, suddenly, he found himself face to face with a slender, fair-haired girl, with gentle, blue eyes. The color deserted his face at the shock at the sight of him.

"Mr. Hazeltine," she said, as he lifted his hat.

"Mr. Hazeltine," she said, in her low, sweet voice, tremulous, while, at the same time she extended her hand, "I have been waiting to see you ever since I heard of your trouble. I wanted so much to tell you how very sorry I am for you."

He took her hand and held it in his while he looked gravely down upon her fair, uplifted face.

"Mary," he said, quietly, "I believe that you are a good, true woman. What you have since to me my reverance, my faith in your sex? Will you become my wife?"

Her fair head drooped, for some moments she made no reply.

"Shall I wait?" at length murmured, "do you still love her?"

"Absolutely not," he replied, "or I should not ask you to become my wife. Mine is not a nature to love those who have wronged me."

She lifted her blue eyes, such gentle, tender eyes, to his face.

"Then I will be your wife," she said.

He took her hand and kissed her, not passionately, but very gently and tenderly.

Six months later Gault Hazeltine and Mary Morton were married. When Louise Rodney heard of the marriage she shrugged her dainty shoulders and said to her husband, with a laugh:

"Of course he only married her through pique."

CHAPTER III.

A week after their marriage Gault Hazeltine entered the room in a New York hotel where his wife dressed for dinner, and awaited him. He held an open telegram in his hand and looked very grave.

"I have just received this telegram from my mother, Mary," he replied. "My uncle has had a stroke of paralysis and is likely to die. We must return at once."

Then the following morning Mr. and Mrs. Gault Hazeltine reached Oak Hall. One glance at the house, with its closed shutters and streamer of crape, was sufficient.

"My uncle is dead," said Gault Hazeltine. Then he turned towards his pale bride. "This is a gloomy home-coming for you, Mary," he added.

She suppressed a shudder as she smiled a little tremulously. It would have taken a stronger nature than gentle Mary Hazeltine possessed not to have been unnerved at the first entrance into the house of death, the first time with the shadow of death upon it.

Mrs. Hazeltine, pale and worn in her heavy mourning garments, met them in the hall.

"Your uncle died at six o'clock this morning, Gault," she said. "He never spoke, nor gave any sign of consciousness after he was first taken."

Gault inclined his head in silence. Whatever grief he may have felt for the old man, who, in his way, had loved him, he gave no sign of it. He accompanied his pale, young bride to the guest chamber, then, having her with his mother, went alone into the room where the dead lay.

Gault Hazeltine did not see his brother Charles again that night at dinner. They shook hands coolly. Young Mrs. Hazeltine was very tired and did not appear.

"Charles, I congratulate you to your honeymoon," said Charles, in the light, flippant manner which was very offensive to Gault's grave, stern nature. He made reply to his husband's sneer.

When they were seated at the table and the servant had withdrawn, Mrs. Hazeltine looked across her elder son with beard, wet eyes and said:

"Gault, I am glad that your uncle has disposed of his property."

She spoke tremulously. It was evident that she was labouring with a secret, pressed with suspense. Charles continued eating his dinner with evident indifference.

"I know nothing whatever in regard to the matter," replied Gault, with a slight frown of annoyance. "My uncle never spoke to me on the subject."

"Well, you will tell us about this soon enough, mother," said Charles.

Mrs. Hazeltine looked at him and sighed deeply. Charles had by no means mended his ways during the past six months. Owen Gault had preserved an ominous silence which was even worse to his sister than former threats.

"What will become of him?" she thought miserably. "If Owen has left him nothing."

It was with a heart beating sickening that she sat in the library, two days later, to listen to the reading of her brother's will. Her face looked ghastly white in contrast with her sombre robes, her hands trembled as they lay clasped upon her lap.

Charles sat beside her, one hand resting upon the arm of her chair. A slight, nervous twitching of his lips alone betrayed his emotion. Gault, grave and calm, sat at a little distance. With the exception of the lawyer, a man of about sixty years, there was no one else present. To Mrs. Hazeltine, with her over-strung nerves, the lawyer seemed an interminable time in producing the will from a fat box which he carried, and unfolding the document at length, however, he commenced to read slowly and distinctly.

The will was short and its contents added by the following clause:

Owen Gault left all his property, amounting to about $70,000 to his nephew, Gault Hazeltine, Mrs. Hazeltine to receive from the estate an annuity of $1,200, which was to revert back to Gault Hazeltine at the expiration of twenty-five years, in case of Gault Hazeltine's death prior to that of his brother, Charles was to receive twenty-five thousand dollars, the rest of the estate being entirely at the disposal of Gault.

As the lawyer finished reading the will Charles rose to his feet, pale to the lips, a strained laugh.

"I wonder what idea the old man had in his head when he made that last remarkable bequest," he said. "Do you think it will come in for that twenty-five thousand dollars, Gault?" turning towards his brother, with a slight, sneering smile.

Gault Hazeltine made no reply. Indeed, he hardly heard the remark, so wrapt was he staring fascinatedly upon his mother. She had risen to her feet, pale to the lips and trembling in every limb; her eyes with a mingled look of hatred and rage, were fixed upon her elder son.

"Mother!" cried Gault, stung, for the moment, out of his usual calmness, and making a movement towards her.

She waved him back with her hand.

"Do not speak to me; do not come near me!" she cried. "I have never loved you, and now—now I think I hate you!"

Gault Hazeltine drew back and his dark face flushed a shade darker. Then he went up to Charles and put her arms tenderly about him.

"Come, dear," she said, "we will leave this house forever. I have but a little, but I shall have that with you."

"I cannot believe that Charles has sunk so low as to drink to excess," said Gault, and the quiet, but utter contempt in his voice stung Charles into a fury, shame which brought a crimson flush to his brow. "And your home is here," added Gault.

"My home is with the son I love," passionately answered Mrs. Hazeltine. "I would rather share poverty with him than live in riches and luxury with you."

"Pardon me, dear madam," interposed the lawyer, "but, as a friend, I would advise you to leave the matter alone and not to decide too hastily. I am sure that it was Mr. Gault's desire that you should make your home at Oak Hall."

"Of course you will remain at Oak Hall, mother," said Charles, "there is nothing else for you to do. I will not drag you down with me any further in my little unreality. But she only clung the closer to him.

"Gault, you will not let your brother separate me from you," she said, and they knew it would be useless to urge or plead with her further.

CHAPTER IV.

Nearly three years later. In one of the bed rooms in her father's house Louise Rodney was sitting upon the floor, playing with a beautiful child three years of age. Her face passed and her husband entered, pausing to look at them with the picture made by the young mother and child.

Dinner was over, supper and luncheon is ready, Louise," he said, as he caught up the baby and tossed him, chuckling with delight, high into the air.

Mrs. Rodney called the nurse and went down with the baby in her arms.

John Rodney's home was in Philadelphia. He was a lawyer by profession, but too indolent and unpractical to make his way in the world. He had a small income, but it did not go far towards supporting their extravagance. Louise was extravagant and unthinking, and natural consequence was that they lived beyond their means and got upon bad terms. Then Louise proposed visiting her father for a few weeks, for economical.

Doctor Abner was waiting for them in the dining room. When they were seated at the table he said:

"Well, Mrs. Gault Hazeltine has a fine little daughter now."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Louise.

Rodney looked up quickly with a sudden gravity upon his face.

"By the way, papa," said Louise, "I wish you would tell me all the particulars in regard to old Mr. Owen's will. He left everything to Gault, did he not?"

TEMPTING.

Bishop—Why did the cannibals eat the last missionary?
Prelate—He dressed in such good taste.

Hood's Sarsaparilla
Makes Pure Blood

Mainhall was looking Fincastle frankly in the face with not a trace of the anger that had distorted his visage only a minute before.

"Yes, Mr. Mainhall, it would."

"Then won't you believe what I am trying to do? I suppose I should be nervous in your place, Mr. Fincastle, but you would be a great deal more nervous than you are now were you in mine. Try and look at the matter in that way."

Fincastle was too much wrought up to reply. Besides, he was concerned about their passage through the cut. He nodded reassuringly to Mainhall and then, grasping the lever to be in readiness for any emergency, he cast his gaze ahead.

The little wayside station and the few mean habitations grouped about it, sped past them and were swallowed up in the darkness out of which they had come. The darkness into which they were going was pierced by a long bright ray from the engine's nocturnal eye. The two lines of rail ahead shone like burnished steel, as indeed, they were.

The cut was less than a mile ahead. It was not a cut alone, but a curve running through a cut. It was about a quarter of a mile from one end of it to the other. At any time, under any circumstances, it was a place of peril, and now the danger was multiplied many times by the high speed and fell headlong to the platform of the tender.

"Now!" cried De Lisle, "we must capture him and bind him hand and foot. Both together, Fincastle!"

CHAPTER VIII.

CHECK-TO-FACE WITH DEATH.

Mainhall was clearly at a disadvantage, but Fincastle and De Lisle were a little too elated. He was on his feet as they rushed upon him and thrust his two revolvers in their faces.

They felt that to lay a hand on him would be certain death.

But he was master of the situation and whether he was sane or a dangerous maniac, he had them at his mercy.

By this time the engine was at the center of the cut and midway of the curve.

Fincastle breathed a sigh of relief at the thought that at least half the danger was passed, but in an instant they might collide with a train coming up the line. He leaned out of one of the front windows of the cab and looked as far ahead as he could see.

Pitching and tossing, almost like a boat on a storm-swept sea, the locomotive darted round the curve and toward the lower end of the cut, and with a terrible fascination Fincastle still tried to penetrate the

"I am a dead shot and will shoot before I yield."

at which the locomotive was moving.

Again, instinctively, Fincastle sought to retard the motion of the throbbing thing of iron and steel that was heaving them on an errand of unwelcome mystery, perhaps to destruction.

"Have a care!" hissed Mainhall. "Have a care! Don't forget the Rocket Express!"

The superintendent gave up again to this strange man of iron will, but only for an instant, for the instinct of self-preservation was too strong to be trampled upon thus.

Again Fincastle sought to shut off the steam. Mainhall seized his wrist and wrenched his hand away from the lever. De Lisle looked on with baited breath.

"Madman!" howled Fincastle, his voice ringing loud and clear above the roar and rattle of the bounding locomotive. "Madman! You would send us all to death! I would be criminal to yield to you further! Stand back! Stand back! Stand back, I say!"

Mainhall only clung to him the tighter.

"Let the brute run!" he cried, in reply. "Let her go! She is doing very well!"

"De Lisle!" yelled Fincastle, "De Lisle, this man is crazy. This whole senseless mission is but a creation of a mind demented—the freak of a lunatic. To be guided by him longer is worse than folly. We must overpower him! Seize him, De Lisle! Seize him!"

As these words reached him, Mainhall leaped back and stood in the front of the tender, a revolver in either hand. Fincastle and De Lisle were both covered by his deadly aim.

"I am a dead shot!" he cried. "I will shoot him! I will yield in this matter! Make no mistake. The one of you who attempts to reduce my speed will make the rest of the trip a corpse. Don't try to pull your guns—you will be too late!"

"My God!" thought De Lisle. "Fincastle is right—this man is a maniac, and we are in his power!"

The engine had now entered the long, curving cut and nothing was visible in advance beyond where the shining rails appeared to penetrate the blackness. The thing of sentiate metal that was bearing them onward toward an unknown goal and an unknown fate, rocked frightfully as it ploughed its way into the deepening gloom and at times none of the three stood any too firmly on his feet.

Mainhall staggered, then lost his balance and fell headlong to the platform of the tender.

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Suddenly he stood upright and listened.

"Heavens!" he cried. "That was a whistle!"

"Fool!" shouted Mainhall. "'Twas but the ringing of your ear. Don't you know you've cleared the track and there is no danger. Coward!"

The stinging taunt fell unheeded on Fincastle's ears. He was filled with a terrible sense of impending danger.

"There is a train coming!" he said.

"You're mistaken!"

"There surely is," cried De Lisle. "I heard the whistle."

"Fool! You heard nothing but the echo of your own silly fears."

Mainhall spoke as calmly and deliberately as he had ever spoken in his life.

Fincastle attempted to stop the engine but Mainhall sprang upon him with a terrifying shout. But De Lisle hurled a heavy piece of coal at Mainhall with such deadly aim that it struck him on the forehead and for the moment half-stunned him.

As Mainhall staggered backward, De Lisle seized him by the throat and hurled him to the floor of the cab, and as he knelt upon him Fincastle reversed the engine.

There was a creaking of wheels, a trembling of the whole fabric of the locomotive, the tracks gave forth ascending showers of sparks, and in an incredibly short while the engine came to a standstill, then began to move backward with accelerated speed.

Suddenly a blinding light burst upon their view and they realized that a train was bearing down upon them from the direction in which they had been going, a train which, had they not turned back when they did, would inevitably have crashed into them in two minutes more and from whose rushing advance it might even now be too late for them to escape.

They were gaining in speed and it soon became evident that the oncoming train had increased, also, and the danger was over.

Fincastle saw that De Lisle had liberated Mainhall and the latter was staring sternly at the evidence of the peril in which he had involved himself and his companions.

"If we had been running at sixty miles an hour, we would not have got off alive," he said. "You see I was right."

"But think how much better it would have been had we approached this cut more cautiously," answered De Lisle.

"Oh, this is a mere mischance—just a blunder of Fincastle's, who should have had the track clear according to program. His failure to do so has imperiled all our lives and will cause such a loss of time that we shall be unable to save the Rocket Express!"

The two were aghast at his cool audacity.

"This is criminal negligence on your part, Fincastle," he added, "and your defiance of my wishes and of your own promises was of criminal idiocy. Who do you now think was crazy—you or I? There's no such fool on earth as the man who thinks he knows it all. Now," in a tone of authority, "run back to the Junction, and get on the switch while this train which has no business on the main track is allowed to pass us, and while the Rocket Express dashes straight to perdition, for only by accident or by the help of a direct interposition of Providence, can we hope to save her now!"

With the air of the real switchman, who obeyed his signals promptly and accurately, Fincastle put the engine on the switch and the track had scarcely been made ready for the up-train before it halted beside them.

Fincastle sought out the conductor and the engineer and found them talking together excitedly and comparing two slips of paper, which they held in trembling hands.

"How did you make that horrible mistake?" he asked.

"It beats the devil!" exclaimed the engineer, holding out to Fincastle the flattering slip of paper.

"Too much for me!" the conductor blurted out, putting his finger on a line of the paper he had been comparing with the engineer's.

Fincastle looked at the two slips of paper and gave utterance to a cry of consternation. Presently he said:

"These orders appear regular and are signed apparently by me, and not by the dispatcher, but they are forgeries. They purport to give train No. 10 the right of way over this division, and their real purport was to destroy you and us as a means to further crimes."

Another installment of this fascinating story will appear next week. Ledger readers are respectfully asked to note the premium announcements on pages thirteen and fifteen.

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An electric searchlight, mounted upon a wagon resembling in general appearance an ordinary fire engine, is to be added to the equipment of the New York city fire department. A small dynamo, operated by the wagon, supply two lights, each having an eighteen-inch lens. The light can be either concentrated on a particular point, or spread over a wide area, and if necessary, the lamps can be carried to a distance from the wagon, the electric connection being maintained with insulated cables. The object of the searchlight engine is both to illuminate dark streets and correct errors in the firemen have to place their hose and to throw their lids into windows and upon roofs where they are to be rescued from the flames and smoke.

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A RICH FOOL'S CRIME.

From Love to Vengeance --- Story of a Heart That Broke Yet Triumphed--- A Poor Girl's Fortune.

By AGNES GERALD LYLE

Author of "Lost to the World." "The Witches of Wildwood," Etc.

(Copyrighted, 1899.)

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CHAPTER VII.
RETRIBUTION.

The threat of Mark Harris was no idle boast. His millions of money had made him very near and dear to the Czar. Somehow czars, kings, emperors, and even presidents of our own republic, have a warm place in their hearts for men of millions. They find them convenient in the maintenance of position and power and to save private fortunes.

The wealth of Mark Harris had been accumulated, as most such wealth is, by his father by very unwarrantable means.

The poor had been ground into the dust, the wife, mother and child of toil had starved that millions might be accumulated to give the son an opportunity to defy all laws.

He had revealed his wealth and power to friends near the Czar. He had been taken wholly by surprise in the discovery that the widow, Lady Lancelot, was Grace Mortimer, but he had suspected Blanton was in the city and preparing to have him extradited. He had provided against such a contingency by employing a number of spies, who were ready to swear that they had both been seen in consultation with nihilists.

Strange cipher dispatches were to be attributed to him, which he had hired people to interpret.

"Now, Grace Mortimer," he hissed, when he had laid the whole plan before her, "consent to become my wife and drop this shadowing business, this thought of retribution, or you and this man Blanton shall both go to Siberia."

The start, the pallor, the trembling form, all convinced him that what he had all along suspected was true. She loved the man Blanton.

"What do you say?"

She turned away and hid her face.

"Do your worst, Grace, I am prepared for both of you. You will accede to my terms or yourself and Blanton will both land in Siberia."

He turned to the door and walked away.

For a moment Grace Mortimer leaned against a huge jardenier for support. Blanton was even then in the building, and despite her denial of any knowledge of his whereabouts she was convinced Mark knew of his presence.

Did he really hold the trump card in his hand?

She would see.

She went to the door of a small apartment and rapped on it. The door was opened by the Englishman, Mr. Nelson Blanton. In the apartment were two Russian officers who had evidently been in close conversation with him.

"Well?" asked Blanton

"He knows all."

"Does he?"

"Yes. He knows you are here and our object. He recognizes me at last," said Grace.

"Very well, what does he say?"

"That he is a friend of the Czar and has evidence against us which will send us to Siberia."

"And will he try that?"

"Yes, sir; he means what he says, and believes he holds the winning card."

There was a moment of whispered consultation with the two officers and then a plan was agreed upon.

"We must act in this matter without the knowledge of the Czar," said Blanton. "Our plan may seem rather strange, but it will win."

That night they boarded a sleigh and left St. Petersburg.

The next day one of the spies of Harris told him that the English widow had given up her house with such a good excuse.

"Where has she gone. I must find her."

A few hours later he returned with the information she was resting at a small village called Balakat, ten leagues away from St. Petersburg.

Mark Harris determined to start to Balakat that very night, and find some hiding place in one of the hotels, where he could watch them unobserved.

It was a clear, cold moon night. The sleigh sped over the gleaming reaches of snow. The horses went at a gallop and the dark forests seemed to possess some bewitching charm to Mark Harris, as he sat wrapped in furs and gazed on the surroundings.

His life had been a stormy one. He had yielded to his passions, and had hated to be crossed in his purposes, almost drove him mad.

"Grace Mortimer lives!" he thought. This was a new revelation given by this accursed Blanton. It is Blanton's riches that pursue me. No doubt he loves her, and has determined to win her. I am on the way to make her his wife. I will spoil that game. By the eternal! I have never yet been defeated in any undertaking and I never will be."

Then he began to formulate his plans. He would learn where the two were hiding.

A messenger would be sent back to St. Petersburg for officers to arrest them. They were trying to escape. An attempt at escape meant guilt.

The sleigh suddenly came to a stop.

"What the devil is the matter?" he bawled to the driver.

"There are objects in the road."

"Wolves?"

"No, men."

"It's outlaws. Get your gun," cried Mark, springing to his feet.

"Ho, stand aside, and let me pass," cried the driver.

"Halt! You will surrender the man in your sleigh to us as a prisoner," returned the voice of a Russian.

"What does this mean?" cried Mark.

"I am an American, is wanted."

Bang! went Mark's pistol, wounding one of the men standing in the snow.

"Fool, you will repent that!" howled a voice at his rear.

The driver had raised his gun when a shot brought him down, and the horses, frightened by the discharge of fire arms, plunged forward and started to run, but were seized by stout arms and held.

Mark Harris clinched up to the top of the hind part of the sleigh and fired twice, but missed both times.

Some one leaped upon the sleig, and struck him a blow which rendered him senseless.

When he recovered consciousness it was still dark. He was lying bound hard and fast and the sleigh speeding like a meteor through the snow.

"Be quiet. Don't move or try to escape and you will fare much better," said a strange voice.

The man spoke in English with such a strong American accent that there was no doubting his nationality.

His eyes became aware of the fact that there was another sleigh following close after them. Then there was one before.

Armed men were all around but under the command of this American.

After convincing himself that it was useless to try to free himself, as he was handcuffed, he asked the stranger:

"Who are you?"

"I am John Bledsoe of New York, secret service, Mr. Would give you my card if it was not so dauntedly cold," and Mr. Bledsoe chuckled softly at his joke.

All night and next day through a strange, wild country they traveled.

A perfect understanding seemed to have been had with the people. There were always fresh relays of horses and they never stopped but a moment at a time, then away they flew like the wind.

The whole thing seemed to have been arranged.

"Where am I being taken?" asked Harris, of the man who had called himself John Bledsoe.

"To New York, United States of America, where a charge of murder awaits from Connecticut there awaiting you."

They stopped for a few hours only at a small cabin on the road.

Here, for the first time, he saw Grace Mortimer and Blanton.

He did not speak to them, but he knew full well that they were cause of his capture.

After their rest at this point they pushed on evidently going southward for days, then eastward.

It was late one night when they came to what seemed a large, busy town.

This proved to be the Gulf of Finland. They were on an old, storm shoe with no house in sight.

Lights bobbed on the water from a small vessel anchored near.

The prisoner was lifted out of the sleigh and taken down the rocky beach to a boat, and was then rowed out to the vessel.

He was placed on board a small yacht. Others were on board, but not Grace Mortimer.

He was convinced, however, that two of the officers were there because of Blanton, and Grace Mortimer.

The yacht was rescued had begun to die in his heart, and when he found the Czar, in whose service he was away like a race horse, he began to despair.

For three or four days he was borne he knew not whither.

Then they lay to for a long time.

It was night and the prisoner was sound asleep when he was awakened by his captor saying in his usual, cool manner:

He was taken from the small compartment to the desk and found the yacht anchored in a beautiful harbor, steamer, and at the stern were the stars and stripes.

He looked at his captor.

He was half led and half carried on board the American vessel and soon it was under way.

"Mark Harris, you are now under way to New York. You are going home."

"Yes, this is damnable. Taking a man home in irons. Outrageous!"

"This is justice, Mark Harris."

"Retribution, you mean."

"No, justice."

"Tell me who employed you to hunt me down?"

"I have no hesitation to tell you, sir. It was the Czar's American," said Mr. Bledsoe. "Like yourself, he is a millionaire. It was his yacht which picked up the young lady you had betrayed and thrown into the sea. He heard the story, and on learning full particulars of your rascality, resolved on your punishment."

"Is she his wife?"

"Not yet, but will be. On learning later you had killed George Mortimer, Grace's brother, he persuaded her to remain unknown to the world. She went to England with his mother, and traveled all over Europe as Lady Launcelot."

"To cringe to him."

"Yes."

"I see it all now. It is retribution, retribution!"

CHAPTER VIII.
CONCLUSION.

The steamer reached New York without accident and Mark Harris, the millionaire, was lodged in the jail. His feelings must have been indescribable. The papers were full of the story, but none of his old boon companions, who had been so loyal to him in the days of his prosperity came to even offer a word of condolence.

One morning all the leading dailies contained the following flaring headlines:

"SUICIDE IN PRISON!"

The text went on to state that the millionaire, Mr. Mark Harris, had by some means unknown to the jailer, obtained prussic acid, and taken his own life.

Extradition papers had just been prepared, and he was that day to be removed to Connecticut, the scene of his crime. His own guilty hand had removed him beyond the reach of human justice.

His vast fortune was divided among numerous poor relations scattered over the country, and it is hoped did some good after all.

Two months later, a delightful day in June was drawing to a close. Grace Mortimer, so long mourned as dead, had been restored to her parents.

She was again near the great rock at the end of the point whither she had wandered. A lover was once more at her side.

It was not a false, cruel lover this time, but a gentle and brave man who stood by her side.

"It was here by this great rock that I passed through the most trying ordeal of my life," she said. "Here upon this spot he told me I was not his wife. I had trusted him. I believed him, and even when he admitted that he so cruelly deceived me, I forgave him. It was not until I was rescued from the sea and learned that he had taken the life of my poor brother, to whom my secrets was confided, that all my love was changed to a hope for revenge. Then I hated him—but his memory yet, though I trust God will forgive him for all the great wrongs he has done me."

Her companion, who had been standing silently at her side, now spoke:

"Grace Mortimer, our lives have been strangely mingled. I have known for the last five years that you were one of the best and purest women that ever lived. From the moment that I took you from the sea, with the dark green sea-weeds in your hair, I was strangely impressed with you. The mystery, the strange romance, was not enough to charm a man like Newton Blanton. It was your face, your pure face. When I heard your pathetic story and knew how you had suffered, my heart bled to aid you.

"It is akin to love. My pity grew stronger, but my love overleaped even pity. Oh, I love you, Grace. I know your life—you have told me—but consider me rich. What is riches without happiness? Consent to be mine, and in yon little chapel in the fishermans' village you shall become my wife."

She hesitated a moment and then sobbed:

"Your mother?"

"Mother will sanction anything that will make her son happier."

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She raised her face all radiant, but in tears, to his, and gasped:

"Oh, Newton, can you take me knowing the awful past?"

"It will only make you ten times more dear to me," he answered. "Will you, can you love me?"

"Love you! I have learned to adore you! But this I—I never could have hoped for!"

He clasped her in his arms, and peace, and the beginning of a new, beautiful life was born to them.

(The end.)

THE PROCTOR.

Bolker, during his four years at college, never made a friend. To him neighbor in a lecture meant either nuisance, if fidgety and inclined to talk, or object of indifference, if quiet and taciturn; snob, if well dressed; mountain, if, like himself, shabby. In those four years of toil Bolker never committed the conventional college sins of drinking, smoking or card playing. He spent his time on mathematics, now computing, with infinite patience, how long it takes (disallowing friction) for a drop of water to flow from the north pole to the equator, and now mastering the eccentricities of parabolas and other devilish curves.

Mathematics stamped themselves on his appearance, his habits and his character. The part in his black hair was the perfection of straightness; just as regular as seven-thirty, twelve-and six came each day, so regularly he regaled himself at Foxcroft. As for work, his was invariably ready three days before the required time. Before graduated finally with a summa cum laude and honors in mathematics, an abnormally developed character and a vague longing. This last he promptly confided to himself was for a continuance of his student life, and in hopes of satisfying it, he plunged accordingly into the career of a proctorship.

The next fall found him ensconced in office heartily trusting he should never have to assert himself. Wrestlings with the new quarterly on the day before college opened, with a much connoting sheepskin, he had received by a wink. He was an excuse but will you lend me a match?" from a well-dressed lad, standing at the door.

"Certainly, yes; come in," stammered the proctor, blushing.

"Thanks awfully," said the visitor. "I didn't really want a match, you know. I'm your neighbor, and I thought you would like well meet. I'm a freshman; my name's Watson."

Strangely, the proctor was not bored; indeed, he was glad. "Mine," he said, holding out his hand shyly, "is Bolker." The ingenious intruder grasped it heartily.

"What a jolly room you have—it was in reality almost bare—"I suppose you're a senior?"

"No; I'm a graduate this year."

"That is dignified! What a age it must seem since you came. But I see you're busy fixing up. I ought to be, too. I'm awfully sorry I bothered you. Look around and talk all day, if you'd let me. Well, so long. Come over and see me. Fifteen, right next door," and out he strode, whistling.

Bolker's heart seemed pushing up toward his collar bone. He had not mentioned that he was proctor, because he feared the boy, once knowing it, would avoid him, and that he wanted him back; wanted him to come often.

His wish was gratified. That very night Watson dropped in, now without excuse, to spoke of the attractiveness of the place, or how thoroughly insignificant one felt in it, as though no one whatever was ever [illegible]; wherein it was all quite different from home (home being Clayton, Ohio, and very far away). Then Bolker surprised himself by playing the comforter.

"Must be off" Watson said, sincerely sorry, when the lad finally rose to go.

"Don't want to stir," he said, and getup early. I'm tremendously obliged to—when, it's [illegible]."

"By Jove! I had no idea it was so late. Half-past ten! I'll have to stop that fellow playing his pianola next door."

"Why, you don't mind, do you?"

"No—but you see—I'm proctor in the building."

"You're the last laughed. "Why, you've just graduated. You're joking, aren't you?"

"No, I really am the proctor."

"Oh, well, she's got a pet," chuckled the boy, impudently. "Good night, old man —that is, mean sir!"

The exclamation annoyed Bolker vaguely. What if senior as proctor he should have to —nonsense! His fears were groundless. The fact that he was proctor was known to the handful among the acquaintance from ripening, as time went on, into friendship. The freshman was young and liked the proctor's quiet reserve, his sophisticated advice, and Bolker became equally fond of the wild lad toward whom his solitary heart turned with a tenderness almost motherly.

One night there came from Watson's room more noise than was usual. It began early, and prolonged itself indefinitely. The proctor went to bed doubting. The noise continued. It became intolerable. Jumping into his slippers (which were always, toes out, precisely at right angles to the heel) Bolker raced at the door. For an instant the noise ceased; then the proctor heard from within, "Let me go. I'm all right. I tell you," and an angry "Shut up; get in there quick; I'll go." In the voice of Watson, who thereupon, looking extremely silly, appeared at the door.

"Won't you please stop the noise?" faltered Bolker. "I can't sleep if you don't."

"Were we making a noise? Really, I—" "It doesn't matter at all if you'll only stop. Good night."

"Good night, sir." The door slammed with a scuffle and a blended chorus of "You old liar—oh, oh—give me that—whoop!"

Bolker slipped into bed, very miserable. He hated to do it. Out in the hall he heard another scuffle, mournful reproaches, and boisterous diatribes against all proctors and reluctant good nights. But it was long, despite the succeeding quiet, before he slept.

Next morning Watson appeared for an instant to iterate his regrets. "Just a beer night, you know—my eighteenth birthday. It won't happen again. I assure you. Ta-ta."

During the next week Bolker was wretched because his neighbor did not appear. Doubtless he was angry. To have stopped his birthday party—but once—was duty! Rot! One's duty was to have waited at least a while longer.

As a matter of fact, Watson, as Bolker should have known, was too busy for visiting in that week before the midyears. To keep off probation would be a hard struggle. He had determined accordingly to work hard, and did, so that he scraped through ingloriously.

One day after the troublous times were over the proctor was disturbed in his work by a well-known being at the door, and in answer to his "Come in," Watson appeared all breathless, "I say, my folks are in the next room. They surprised me, and I want you to meet them now, please."

"I'd like to," replied Bolker, nervously, "but—but I'm busy, that is—"

"Oh, rot! Your duty there's no one but mother and sister. I've told 'em so much about you they insist on seeing you, and when they insist you might as well give in right off. It saves time. Don't be insulted if you don't. Come on, there's a good fellow!"

Bolker had never before met any one's people, and didn't know quite how to do it. So I was only after many mingled fears that he at length consented.

The fear that Watson much like her son, and a brief talk with her made him forget his hands and feet. Later, as Miss Watson's manner grew less kindness in looking after her brother, and to her interrogated queries disclosed an absolute ignorance of all things academic, Bolker found himself talking with acute freedom, than he had ever dreamed of. The girl had all the unaffected frankness of her brother, combined with a certain shy and womanly grace, that quite captivated him.

At the end of a blissful hour came the climax; they asked him to dine. And when he perfectly [illegible] regret [illegible] buttered his arguments; he was no stranger; they had seemed to know him for ages, he must feel [illegible] at ease, in short he accepted.

At the end of a week Watson's people took rooms in Cambridge. "Mother likes the place better than Boston," explained the boy, "and as the chief attraction, and they want to be near me. Oh—and they want to see you, too. Mother's very fond of you about the right sort." Bolker flushed. "That's very kind, I'm sure."

And he did call often; the girl was wonderfully attractive. He was fond of Watson, and his mother left, Bolker, for the first time in his college career, felt lonely.

Worst of all, the April examinations put Bolker wretchedly behind in his studies, and he won't have me come back if I don't make my class. But, hang it all, I couldn't help it. It takes such a time to get started, the hours always up by the time I get [illegible] Confound it, I'll manages somehow, I guess."

The 23d came, the first four finals, despite the innumerable seminars and incessant grinding they prevented them, to Bolker's very great sorrow.

It so happened that in the fateful room, the examinations was the last, a written translation in English, Bolker was proctor. "Good luck to you," he whispered to Watson, giving him a free book. Then he settled into the dreamy, trance-like state that was to last, he supposed, for three-hour ordeal.

After a while he glanced toward Watson. His head leaned [illegible] on his hand, and he was looking quarrily on the book of the day in front of him. Bolker looked away hastily, then, with a fearful doubt, looked again. Could it be that the wretched boy, despite all he'd said, was cheating? Not afraid of failure, was taking this cowardly method of insuring success? Was he cheating. With a great weight on his heart Bolker looked away again.

"I'll report you!" he hissed, bending low. Watson looked up and laughed. "Oh, you wouldn't do that!"

The watchman resumed his seat, trembling. He dared not look. It must have been a mistake. "But if it isn't, what shall I do?" he asked himself. "Oh, I'll—I will look—to prove I was wrong." Reluctantly he swung around to Watson's desk [illegible] Watson to Bolker's cheeks —here was no time for leniency. He would report, he must; [illegible] Cheat. Report? No, thank heaven, that was not necessary!

"Say, old man," he pleaded, "do you mind changing places? I feel sick—I want to sit by the window. Awfully sorry."

"Sure, you're sick!" queried the other, hopefully, and slowly, dazed, he moved back into the chair and mopped his face. Then he looked triumphantly at Watson, who, looking actually sick, after that, the boy continued to scratch along, never once pausing, for he knew that in the course of an hour before time was up, he handed in his book and scurried out.

When the examination ended Bolker, faint and trembling, stood at the door and the fellow friend. Through the open door he described the goodly collecting innumerable [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible]

"Where's Mr. Watson?" he demanded, fiercely.

"Why, he's just this very minute went away, swearin' around like a trooper. He's a bad man. Such a time you never seen, sir. He's terrible careless, is Mr. Watson, sir, and I've seen a lot of 'em, sir."

Bolker slammed the door. His anger was rapidly cooling away. "Poor little chap, he's so young! It was an awful temptation and he yielded. Perhaps you [illegible] you [illegible] he pulled through. You do, Mr.—and it's enough to have stopped him, made his life hell. Yet—and still the long, long, grinding corporation called Harvard, of which you are the tool, the spy. For that you've sacrificed your friend, your only one, her brother!"

All through the summer Bolker toiled solitary and wretched, hoping, praying, in spite of himself, that Watson had contrived to pass and would return. Never had summer seemed so hot, so long, so unendurable; never had he accomplished so little; never had he made such childish mistakes; never felt so utterly alone.

The following year, he became more and more despondent, fearing he should never again see his boy now crammed friend. He began [illegible] resigning, for the reason that in allowing another to cheat he had himself cheated.

But one morning he was startled and [illegible] by a letter. In it he was well knew. "Hello, Bolker; lend me a match, will you?"

"Watson, Watson!" he cried, springing up. "Did you—"

"Well, I guess I passed everything pretty well; two D's, two C Minus's, and—don't faint now—a B in English. Yes, English. You must have been my mascot that day when you were in the room. Oh, say—good news. My family are coming to live in Cambridge; they liked it so much—and they want to be [illegible]. Now, I did forget to tell you, did I? You're surprised about that B, eh? What—you don't know how I've before underrated my ability! Well, I always liked Ben and Donne and that [illegible] but what's the matter, old man? You look funny. Whe—ew! I remember now. You got off cheating in that exam? Why, at the time I thought surely you were [illegible] Well, you know, it bothered me often during the summer, because I remembered how serious you looked and that you were coming to live in the proctor. Lord, man, you ought to have known I'd [illegible] thought that of me. I am sorry! Don't deny it, man; you can't. Why, I'm awfully sorry you must have thought me a beast! I remember it now, and I suppose it did look suspicious, and I signed. But you have done it. But I couldn't help it. There was an awful grind in front of me. But it seems like a mean, two pages a minute, you know. I liked watching him write and wished I didn't look to see what he was writing. I'm not as bad as all that. Don't be foolish, Bolker. You look as if you could cry. You don't. You haven't shaken hands yet. Put her here!"

Bolker, unable to speak, severed Watson's big hand with both his own and looked away.—Harvard Advocate.

A Doctor's Bill of $39.00.

The courts have decided that a physician is entitled to $1.50 a visit if you call at his office or home, or $2.00 if he calls on you.

The average length of time that it takes to cure a case of private disease is thirteen weeks; at two calls a week makes the Doctor's bill $26.00. This is saved if you will only send for the three months' complete course of treatment for the cure of gonorrhea or nervous diseases, which is sent without money by the Washington Medical Institute, H. 36 State St., Chicago, Ill.

Write to them today enclosing ten 2c. stamps for postage and revenue stamps, and they will send the full treatment prepaid in plain wrapper.

Over the Falls.

A Wisconsin paper reports an Indian's remarkable escape from death. He was one of a driving crew that broke a jam above Sturgeon Falls. He attempted to cross the river on a log, and to the horror of the spectators, was carried over the falls.

The falls are forty feet high and consist of two cascades, the right and left. Of course the man was given up for dead, and the spectators never thought it useless to search the river for his body, as the logs were piling over the falls at a rapid rate.

The next morning, however, an Indian walked into camp for breakfast. He had been swept down the river and had landed on the bank, where he managed to crawl out, finding only a few scratches and bruises, but being, as he remarked, "rather tired," he lay down and slept until daylight, and was none the worse for his adventure.

Experience Vs. Arithmetic.

Teacher—Johnny may stand up to recite. Now, Johnny, suppose I borrow $50 from your father and agree to pay it a week, how long will it be before he gets his money?

Johnny—Just one week.

Teacher—Oh, think again; that's not right.

Johnny—Yes, it is. I know my father. He'd have you up in the courts by that time.

Sufficent.

Mrs. Ashley—Isn't this new prayer rug of mine pretty, Mr. Sparkly—Yes, but isn't it very small?

Mrs. Ashley—Well, it is large enough for all my prayers.

A Jungle Toilet.

Mr. R.—Aren't you ready yet? What in the device are you waiting for?

Mrs. R.—I can't find the nail file, and my mane isn't manicured.

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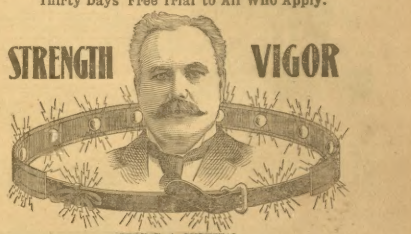

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Anyone who fancies he will not stop lively with one of Prof. Chrystal's belts around his body should put on one and make a note of it. The effect is exhilarating to a degree that will make you happy.

They can take the belt home, put it on, wear it for thirty days and if they do not feel young and vigorous send it back and be [illegible] to no expense. This is genuine enterprise. It is in fact absolutely without risk to anyone.

Weak men will find in Prof. Chrystal's Electric Belt the first and only renewal of vigor they have experienced since youth. This wonderful belt has startled the world and gives an impetus to the hopes of weakened mankind such as will make thousands of useful citizens where we now have melancholy unlitheapes. It will, in every weak and despairing man take new courage and most. Prof. Chrystal's generosity as it deserves.

Don't hesitate; put on this belt wear it thirty days and you will be a new man, full of strong and as filled with the joy of oncoming vigor that you wouldn't part with the belt at any price.

Do not fail to write at once to Prof. A. Chrystal, 163 Trade Office Block, Marshall, Mich., as he is anxious to have every man wear his new and marvelous belt a moment for 30 days and try it fully before spending a cent for it. Remember after giving the belt a trial if you are not perfectly satisfied return it to us, it costs you nothing to try it.

Write today before you forget it.

A Natural Query.

Johnnie—Pa-a-a! what eleven is he on?

The Scriptural Injunction.

Teacher (after ten minutes' talk on the subject)—Now, Johnny, when you are struck upon the right cheek, what do you do?

Johnny—Turn de left one, miss, and when de duffer reaches, give him a uppercut dat will put him to sleep. See?

The Fodderless.

Askit—Too bad that General Buller can't get feed for his mules, in addition to his other misfortunes.

Tellit—Yes, that makes an orphan of him.

Askit—How so?

Tellit—Well, he's both Modderless and fodderless now, isn't he?

Couldn't Blame Them.

"When I stand on the stage I see nothing, and am conscious of nothing but the role I am playing. The audience disappears entirely!"

"Well, I can't blame the audience much for that!"

Discovered by a Woman.

I have discovered a positive cure for all female diseases and the pile. It never fails to cure any of the various diseases peculiar to women, such as leucorrhœa, displacements, ulceration, profuse flowing, painful menstruation, and all spinal troubles. I will gladly mail a box of this wonderful medicine free to every sufferer. Mrs. C. B. MILLER, Box 198, Kokomo, Ind.

A Record Holder.

"I take it," said the tourist, "that this is a strictly agricultural county."

"Yes, indeed," replied the local statistician. "I figure that our people have bought more gold bricks per capita than the people of any other county in the state."

A Slow wd Girl.

Ella—You must have been up late last night; there are rings around your eyes.

Stella—Well, they are engagement rings; I sat up with Fred until he proposed.

HOLDING THEM UP.

"He kept his hands in his trousers' pockets all the evening."

"Yes, and Mary told me she found two suspender buttons on the floor this morning."

"AN EGG PUNCH."

Diamond Cut Diamond.

Downtown—Here comes Jackson. He's got a new baby and he'll talk us to death.

Uptown—Well, here comes a neighbor of mine who has a new setter dog. Let's introduce them to each other and leave them to their fate.

A Good Reason.

Mrs. Bronxborough—Your cook left you rather suddenly, didn't she?

Mrs. Richmond—Yes. Her best beau wanted to borrow my husband's dress suit, and when my husband refused the cook left.

Cause for Worry.

"I'm always worried when Henry begins saving string."

"Why?"

"It makes me think he has been doing something extravagant in business."

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Not Worth Solving.

She—You are a conundrum.

He—Indeed!

She—Yes, and I'm going to give you up.

The True Standard.

"What is your idea of a good joke?"

"Well, any joke that makes you angry because you didn't think of it yourself."

A Scientific Explanation.

John Green—Thet, 'Mandy, is a fire escape. I don't know ez I kin explain how dis fire escapes down the dinged thing, but s'pose it works on th' principle ur a lightnin'-rod.

Ferdinand—Seen much of Miss Tinkle lately?

Flossie—Not since the bathing season.

Just One Experience.

"This beautiful pipe was given me for Christmas," said the grave-looking man to the department store clerk. "I believe it was purchased here. May I exchange it for a badly needed pair of shoes?"

She Knew Him.

"Don't talk about turning over a new leaf," she said. "You've done that before, and it doesn't fill the bill. The only salvation for you, John, is to cut down and turn over the whole tree, and split it into kindling wood!"

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for Children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic. 25 cents a bottle.

He Appeals to his Record.

Isaac—Vot? Dey won't git me sixty days' credit?

Young Isaac—No, dey say dot you failed only dree months ago.

Isaac—Vell, did dey efer know me to fail twice inside of six months?

A Damon and Pythias Affair.

"Talk about true friendship," said the man who is just getting over the grip; "there's Smith. I've known him for over thirty years and he's the only person of my acquaintance who never suggested an unfailing remedy."

May—What would we do if it wasn't for our friends?

Tom—We'd have to do strangers, I guess.

What He Railed At.

"What do you think of this movement against wearing feathers?" asked the Bostonian.

"Oh, I don't mind the feathers so much," replied the man from the south; "it's the tar I object to."

Do You Want a Buggy?

If you have any use for a fine open or top buggy, surrey, phaeton or spring wagon at the lowest price ever heard of, a price that will surprise you, privilege of free trial and payable after ? ordered cut this notice out and mail to SEARS, ROEBUCK & Co., Chicago, Ill., and they will mail you their very latest and extremely interesting vehicle offer and special catalogue.

A Biblical Reason.

Jeweler—Why do you refer to watch cases without movements as faith?

Pious Clerk—Well, you see, they don't amount to very much without good works.

On Listening Terms.

"Are you on speaking terms with Mr. Chatterbox?"

"No; merely on listening terms."

It All Depended.

Moses, Jr.—Fader, a shentleman in the shop vants to know if that all-wool non-shrinkable shirt will shrink?

Moses, Sr.—Does it fit him?

Moses, Jr.—No; id is too big.

Moses, Sr.—Yah; id vill shrink.

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Somewhat Musical.

McGigger—He's from Chicago, you know.

Thingumbob—I thought he was.

McGigger—You know him then. By sight?

Thingumbob—Yes, and by sound. He gives a soup-coating recital every day at the restaurant where I lunch.

From Whence She Came.

"Mrs. Newcash boasts that she came from a very old, aristocratic family. She doesn't look it."

"Oh, I don't know. She looks as if she might have been cold for one, some time or other."

A GAME OF POKER IN THE BASEMENT.

Confined With a Sty.

"Where's Porkey? I don't see him any more."

"O, he's confined at home with a sty, and I don't think he'll get over it."

STORYETTES.

A Woman's Insistence.

Two pretty young women entered a large grocery one evening. From their conversation it was evident that they belonged to some boarding school in the neighborhood, and had stolen out for a few moments to buy dainties which they meant to smuggle to their room.

"There's one thing I don't like about the clerks in this store," said one of them, while they waited for the salesmen, "and that's the way they insist on telling you that you don't want what you do want and that you do want what you don't want. Every time I come in here I have the same experience, and I'm just tired of it. The next time it happens I'm going to tell the clerk just what I think of him."

At that moment a clerk approached and asked the young women what they wanted. The one who had so much to complain about pointed at one of a row of cracker tins and said:

"I want a pound of those."

"Oh, no, you don't," said the clerk, scarcely looking around; "none of these, or those here; they're all very nice."

The young woman threw a glance which said, "What did I tell you?" at her companion, and turning to the clerk, said, fiercely:

"No; I don't want anything of the kind. I want those and no other."

"I beg your pardon," he began, "I thought you—"

"Never mind what you thought," said the young woman. "I guess I know what I want. Now just let me have a pound of those, please," and she turned to her companion with a look of triumph on her face which plainly meant:

"Didn't I squelch him?"

"Very well, madam," said the clerk, humbly, "but may I inquire whether they are for yourself?"

"Well, of all the impertinent questions," began the young woman, when her companion interrupted and turning to the clerk, said:

"Why do you ask?"

"Oh, because they're dog biscuit," replied the clerk, indifferently. "Still, of course, if you want them you can have them."

"Never mind," faltered the young woman, who had insisted on having what she wanted. "I guess I don't want anything at all," and she strutted out of the store looking very much ashamed, followed by her companion, who was struggling to hide her laughter.

The clerk didn't say anything, but there was a satisfied smile on his face as he banged the cover down on the can of dog biscuit and walked away to wait on another customer.

Didn't Like Soup.

Once, as a lieutenant-colonel, indignant at the wholesale waste of excellent soup bones, I ordered the master cook to endure, under pain of my displeasure, that large caldrons filled with the otherwise unutilized materials should be kept simmering for my inspection three times a week. To this he was to add peanuts, seasoning and so forth, at the cost of a few pence, not charged to the men; and as a guarantee of obedience he was habitually to send in to my orderly room, just before the men's dinners, a specimen of his brew. Respectful remonstrances came from cooks and sergeants, to which I blandly replied:

"Yes, I understand your objections; but the soup shall be made."

After a week's trial spokesmen from the messes addressed to me further and urgent complaints, always with the utmost respect.

"We don't like this here soup, sir; nasty, thick, greasy, poor stuff, with nothing to feel between the teeth; we do not like to see it before us on the table."

"But you do not pay a farthing for it," I pointed out to the malcontents. "You need not consume this gratuitous food if you do not like it, and you are not deprived of one ounce of your ration meat. My instructions must be carried out, and kettles of soup must be placed in the rooms until further orders."

They retired, silenced, but unconvinced.

About three weeks later I ascertained the further development of my innovation. For a few days the soup had continued to be eyed with anger, and, untasted to be relegated to the gutter. Then by degrees one or two of the men thought they might as well swallow a little of the savory food. Their example was soon followed and finally it was generally hailed as a delicious addition to their meal.

Ode Conundrum.

They had started a Conundrum club, and every one was expected to come prepared with a number of good ones.

"I've got one," Anderson said.

"What is it?" queried the rest.

"When is an apple pie?" He stopped, and every one looked at him, but said nothing.

"Well," asked a man across the room, "go on. What did you stop there for?"

"Go on? Where? What for?" he asked.

"Why, go on with your conundrum. When is an apple pie what?"

"That's what I said," he replied.

"Well, we want to hear what is the conundrum?"

"When is an apple pie?"

"There isn't any sense in that," put in another fellow. "What's the rest of it?"

"There isn't any rest," persisted Anderson. "When is an apple pie?"

"When is an apple pie what?" yelled the others.

"Who said any apple pie what?"

"You did."

"I didn't. I didn't say anything about an apple pie."

"You did."

"I didn't."

"You did."

"I didn't."

And then the whole assembly sat on Anderson, and when the police came in and rescued him it took half an hour to explain that an apple was pie when it was closed up with a crust and, although, like the pastry, it smashed up the club, though, at the conundrum's usefulness is that far established.

Spooner's Mistake.

"Do you really mean it, Mr. Spooner, when you say I am the best girl in the world?" asked Miss Flypp, after the young man had suggested that she should become Mrs. Spooner.

"Indeed, I do, Miss Flypp," asserted the young man. "I say it again—you are the best girl in the world."

"And the loveliest, I think you said?"

"The loveliest, without doubt."

"I think you said something about my accomplishments, too?"

"I did. I said they excelled those of any other girl."

"I believe you called me sweet?"

"A sweeter woman ne'er drew breath,'" quoted the ardent lover.

"You used the word 'perect,' too, did you not?"

"I did. I also pronounced you the pink of perfection, propriety and modesty, the empress of my heart, the peerless one among the beauteous creatures of your sex, a maiden adorable, enchanting, and worthy of the hand of the best man on earth. Say the word that will make me the happiest man on earth, my own Dora."

"Before I give you an answer, Mr. Spooner, I should like to ask you one question."

"A dozen, if you like."

"One will be enough. Don't you think that you have a great deal of assurance to expect a woman with all these excellent qualities to marry such an ordinary man as you?"

Then Mr. Spooner went home.

Wedded to Realism.

"See here," said the stage manager, "your manuscript calls for a different servant girl in each act. That means three salaries where one would be sufficient. Why not have one servant girl?"

"My dear fellow," replied the playwright, "you forget that I am a realist. Two weeks are supposed to elapse between each act.

IN CHICAGO.

Mrs. Staver—There's Miss Waysup. I understand that when in London she was presented at court.

Mr. Staver—Poor thing; I hope she was acquitted.

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26 YEARS OLD.

Published Every Saturday.

—BY—

W. D. BOYCE CO.

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Back numbers of the LEDGER can be had by addressing this office. Always give the numbers desired, plainly written, accompanied by your full address, and your order will receive prompt attention. Price 5 cents per copy.

BEWARE OF STRANGERS.

THE LEDGER employs no traveling agents to solicit subscriptions, and every person working in that capacity is a fraud. No person is authorized to take subscriptions for THE LEDGER unless he or she be well known in the city or village where they have been appointed agents to sell this paper every week. A liberal reward will be paid for evidence that will enable us to arrest and convict such persons as are now traveling from town to town in different sections of this country, claiming to be agents of THE LEDGER and thereby defrauding the people. Beware of strangers.

Mr. William Rockefeller is a large owner of Standard Oil stock. It pays him princely dividends. He does not really need the extra gains which come to him through whatever government funds may be deposited in the National City bank, of which he is a director. Nevertheless, the deposits of government moneys in that bank rose in course of time from $200,000 to $24,000,000, thus adding to Mr. Rockefeller's bank dividends. If there must be a "pet bank," why must it be a Standard Oil bank?

A man was arrested in New York for tickling his wife so she went into hysterics. It seems pretty tough to send a man to jail for being cheerful. There is evidently no room for the humorist husband in New York. When that wife gets through laughing she will be sorry to see her hilarious husband peeking through the bars. Even a Mormon wife wouldn't be as mean as that.

The ice in the Missouri river, near Sioux Falls, according to the newspapers, exploded, "blowing large blocks forty feet high in the air." No cause for the explosion has been assigned, but perhaps "the old Missourey" decided that it had to do something to keep the Chicago river from receiving all the advertising.

A new species of office boy has appeared in Galesburg. A hole in his trousers was noted the other day and he was asked as to its origin. "Oh," he replied, somewhat unconcernedly, "I got that sliding down the elevator rope. It's too slow to wait for the car."

It has been discovered that a sixteen-year-old New Jersey girl has three husbands and her parents say they do not know what to do to break her of the marrying habit. Has her mother's good right hand lost its cunning?

A new fad has developed in Philadelphia of fasting sick persons to health. If fasting makes health, some energetic summer resort hotel man should advertise his principal inducement and cater to invalids.

An up-to-date undertaking firm of Detroit recently purchased two whole sections in a new cemetery laid out near the city and is advertising free graves for the defunct relatives of all people who patronize it.

It would be just like the trust to sock another cent a pound on the price of paper while Reverend Mr. Sheldon is demonstrating what a good world this might be.

GEORGE WARNER'S CRIME.

BY FRANK HONEYWELL.

George Warner was a university graduate, with the reputation of being a brilliant fellow; but he had a passion for gambling, which he indulged as secretly as possible. Until about a month before his graduation he had fully intended to enter a law office, as soon as he finished his college work, but now he was nursing feelings of bitter disappointment because of the failure of far different plans.

By a course of special study, George had finished his work at the university in the middle of the winter, and about the same time made arrangements for going with a gold-hunting party to Alaska; but his uncle, who had long since taken the place of a father to George, had refused him the money he asked for.

But we have not made the most alarming feature of George's trouble clear. His uncle knew nothing of the disreputable side of his nephew's life; so, when creditors gave the young gambler three months' time in which to pay debts amounting to over a thousand dollars, or be exposed in his home, George feared that the result would amount to his own disinheritance. He did not ask his uncle for money, because he needed it to pay the expenses of his trip, though he claimed that was what he wanted it for; those expenses were to be borne by certain men on condition of their receiving a share in the finds. The young man wanted money to pay his debts, and when he found his plans blocked and danger of exposure near at hand, his bitterness knew no bounds.

You will probably understand by this time that young Warner was an orphan with no fortune of his own. He and his sister, Evelyn, were wards of their uncle, James Harcourt, minister and a man of letters. If Mr. Harcourt was a minister of the gospel and at the same time a wealthy man, his position is by no means unworthy of defense, for few people ever lived who knew how to use money so unselfishly and wisely as he. As a poet and essayist, he was well paid; as a minister, he refused all remuneration.

And yet George Warner nursed feelings of the deepest hatred toward this good man. But if he could be a murderer at heart, he could also conceal his feelings. Mr. Harcourt little suspected his nephew's evil bitterness of heart, and affairs went on for a short time as if nothing were the matter.

In February Evelyn was married. The marriage was a private affair, only relatives of the family and a few particular friends being invited; but as the ceremony has no direct bearing on our story we will not go into detail concerning it.

After the sacred knot was tied, the company took their seats for supper. George sat to the right of his uncle, and affected toward him a due appearance of filial regard and affection, and talked in as pleasant a manner as if he were as contented and happy as the bridegroom himself. Shortly after the second course had been served, George made a witty and happy remark that called attention to a lady at the other end of the table, and while all eyes were thus momentarily diverted from himself, this uncrowned king of villains stealthily dropped something into his uncle's cup.

Not long after supper Mr. Harcourt complained of not feeling well, and excusing himself, retired. His niece wanted to send for a doctor at once, but he objected, saying that it was nothing serious; rest being all that he needed to refresh him.

Next morning James Harcourt was found dead in his bed.

* * * * *

A month went by and people had almost ceased talking about Mr. Harcourt's very sudden death. The doctors were puzzled at first, but at last came to the fatuitous agreement that the cause must have been heart failure. This was very surprising, too, as it had never been known that the minister was affected with any such trouble. At any rate, the matter seemed to be dropped.

Most of the property of the deceased had been willed to George and his sister. There was little difficulty in settling the affairs of the estate, and the property was soon turned over to the heirs. George was now beginning to feel a sense of security. His gambling debts were paid, and, in a material way, everything was going smoothly.

George received the old home as a part of his share of the estate. True, the house was empty now, but this was small matter to him, since he was master of the place. He made final arrangements about joining the Alaskan expedition and invited several of his college fraternity to visit him before he left. They came and went, but George was a shrewd villain, and things were conducted in an orderly manner. After they had gone he was again alone.

But mental torment is the common reaction of an evil deed, and this is what George now began to feel the effects of. It came one morning with an overwhelming depression of spirits. When he stood before the glass he was startled to see the wild, hollow look in his eyes. Then he remembered that he had not slept well during the night and there came to his mind the shadowy recollection of fearful dreams that had troubled his sleep. He did everything in his power during the day to rid himself of the terrible feeling that had haunted him; but by evening he had succeeded only in tiring himself out physically while his mental state was even worse. He went to bed at ten o'clock, but did not sleep till twelve. He passed the night in one continuous sweat. His sleep was full of frightful dreams, all of which had some bearing on his crime. He saw his uncle, white and emaciated, enter the room; and sitting down by the center table, the dead man stared at him for a long time. Then at last, turning his eyes away, the visitor busied himself for a few minutes with writing on a tablet that lay on the table; and after he had finished, he arose and slowly left the room.

The first thing that George did in the morning was to go straight to the table to examine the tablet lying upon it. There was a mysterious power that impelled him to do this, and the result was shocking; for there, written in the full round hand of his uncle and signed with that person's name, was a short poem, whose contents, a broken-hearted appeal to the murderer, seemed to him to be but a reproduction, in different form, of the sad, reproachful look he had seen on his uncle's face in the night just passed.

George read, and when he had finished, stood trembling like a leaf. After all, his vision had not been a dream; his uncle had really entered the room, and started at him and written the poem.

The following night, and the next, and the next, and so on, were but repetitions of his experiences on that first terrible night. There was the same appearance of his uncle, and each morning he found some new verses which, after reading, he invariably destroyed. He slept in every bed room in the house, but the changes made no difference. One night he thought he would give the affair a final test; so he slept in a room where there was not a table nor a chair nor a piece of paper for the specter to use, but all to no avail; in the dead hours of the night he saw his uncle enter, dragging after him a table and a chair. In the morning the table was in the room, and near it was the chair, and on the table the wretched man found a new poem written on a loose sheet of paper.

* * * * *

George's sister was living in Chicago, where her husband was engaged in business. For various reasons, the chief of which was the death of her uncle, they had decided to put off the wedding trip until summer. The loss of her uncle had been a severe blow to Evelyn, and she had scarcely recovered from the first effects, when she received another blow that brought her very near to death's door and kept her bedridden for many a day. She was one morning busied with some fancy decorations in her parlor, when she saw the postman stop at her door and hastened to receive the mail. It was a letter from George, and she returned to the parlor to read it. She broke the seal and read a ways, paled, read farther, then stopped suddenly, and with a scream, fell fainting to the floor. The letter was a detailed confession of her brother's crime, and there was in places a peculiarly wild phraseology which indicated that he was, at the time of writing, at least partly insane.

Mary, the kitchen girl, heard the scream and hastened into the parlor. In doing full justice to Mary, she may be called nothing more or less than a "freak." She saw the lady lying fullength upon the floor; she saw also the letter near by, and quickly snatching it up, began to read. Her wonder and surprise grew unbounded as she followed the contents. By the time she had finished she saw that her mistress showed signs of coming to, and quickly thrusting the letter into her pocket, she hastened from the room. Hurriedly putting on her wraps, she left the house and took a car for the nearest lawyer's, who happened to be a wily fellow, and laid the case before him. When he had read the letter and knew all that she knew, Mary said:

"I suppose I'll get a pretty nice sum for this, won't I?"

"Certainly, certainly, I don't doubt it in the least," replied the lawyer, glibly; "but promise me for your own sake to keep this matter very still."

"I will."

"Very well; you may call again in about two weeks."

When Mary called again after the two weeks had gone by she was met by a placard on the office door which read as follows: "Room to rent. Apply to—"

It was a long time before Evelyn found out what had become of her letter.

* * * * *

Haggard, worn and weary, George Warner sat one evening in his library, more than a fortnight after his first awful vision. He was tired of such a life and would have put himself out of the way, had not fear laid a restraining hand upon him. Suddenly the door bell rang, and he hastened to the front entrance.

A tall, smooth-shaven man asked for Mr. George Warner and, being told that the man before him was the one he sought, asked for a private interview with him. George led the way back to the library.

A few minutes later George Warner sprang from his chair, amazed at a statement of the stranger. Sweat stood out on his brow, and he clutched wildly at his hair. The visitor smiled.

"It's a lie!" almost screamed George. "I never wrote it! I never did it! Let me see the letter!"

"At a safe distance only. Be careful not to snatch at it, for I have something that's a pretty strong argument in my favor in case of treachery." He produced a revolver.

George read. "It looks genuine enough," he said, deeply puzzled, for he could not understand how the forger, for, of course, it was a forgery, could have learned the details, "but I never wrote it!"

"That'll do to tell," replied the other. "Don't fret, however; your sister didn't betray you, and you can escape if you but fork over the tin."

"How much?"

"Ten thousand!"

"I'll turn this place over to you; it's worth fifteen, but I can't wait to sell it. The rest of the property I can turn into cash more easily. Will that suit you?"

"Perfectly. We will finish our business tomorrow. I will call at ten o'clock in the morning. You will have your witnesses ready and I will bring a lawyer. I will pretend to pay you by making an order on a Chicago bank, in which I have no credit, and will turn the letter over to you. Good night."

A few days later George boarded a west-bound train for Seattle, and in two months was deep in the gold-fields of Alaska.

* * * * *

Murder? Yes, George had shot a man. They were partners and quarreled, and George pulled the fatal trigger. A trial of the pioneer type was held and the murderer was sentenced to be hanged. He stood under guard in the center of the crowd of men and saw chill death staring him in the face. The judge asked him if he had anything to say or request to make before he died.

"Yes," said George; "I have a sister and I want to write to her. I have a good deal to say, but am swift with the pen."

"You may write," said the judge.

George wrote. His letter shower either consummate skill or a wonderul inspiration. Sheet after sheet was filled until they constituted perhaps one of the longest letters ever written at a single sitting. The miners, not any of them by any means without culture, stood by filled with wonder to see his pen race over the paper. No one present had ever seen the like before.

"That letter which you received from me, Eva," he wrote, "I must have written in a spell of temporary insanity, and the verses I must have composed in my sleep. It took me a good while to come to this conclusion but I now feel that it is true. I wish I had some of those poems to send to you, Eva; they were beautiful, if I did write them, and I am a good judge. . . . .

"Why I have led such a life, Eva, I cannot say. I shan't attempt to explain, for if there is any excuse it is beyond my power to formulate it. . . . Am I sorry for what I have done? Really, I don't know. I am very cool now. This northern atmosphere has wrought wonders for my nerves, and yet I can affirm or explain nothing. . . . . If I have a soul, it is lost. Perhaps if you were here, your prayers might do something for me. You are different from all other girls, the only girl for whom I ever felt a spark of affection. . . . .

"I know this letter is cruel in places. I know it must be, for I am a cruel man. But, Eva, I close with one last request to make of you. If you do not already so thoroughly despise your brother that you want to put all thoughts of him from your mind, when at night you kneel beside your bed, as I always know you to do, please remember now and then one kind word of entreaty to Him in my behalf. It may do wonders toward mitigating my punishment. Your brother, GEORGE."

UNNATURAL HUNGER

A Sure Sign of Hidden Dyspepsia.

"It was necessary to eat dinner at 11 o'clock," says Mrs. C. F. Ollman, 1131 Preston St., Rockford, Ill., "in order to have strength to prepare the noonday meal for the family.

"While I was drinking coffee I felt so faint at 11 o'clock that I was unable to proceed with the work unless I had lunch. If I missed the 11 o'clock meal, I was attacked with a severe sick headache.

"My complexion at that time was a sight, great blotches appearing on my face, and I was so nervous I could sleep but a few minutes at a time, and would wake in the morning more tired than when I went to bed.

"Our grocer called my attention one day to Postum Cereal Coffee. This was about three years ago. I immediately quit the use of coffee and took up Postum having it prepared properly. The change produced a remarkable result. In a week or two I was able to leave off the 11 o'clock lunch and take my dinner in the regular way with the rest of the family. My blotchy complexion disappeared and a natural complexion took its place. Now I can go from morning until night without a meal, if I desire, and no headache or inconvenience of any kind appears. I sleep sound as a baby, and my kidney trouble, which was more than serious, has entirely disappeared.

"A lady friend was recommended to try Postum, and a short time after, told me she was disgusted with it for it had no taste. I asked her if she boiled it carefully fifteen minutes after the real bubbling commenced. She said no, and in reply to another question, said she used only one heaping teaspoonful to the cup. I explained to her that she must use two heaping teaspoons to the cup and let it boil long enough. The next time I saw her she said she used Postum regularly and liked it very much indeed, and that it had made a great change in her health and the health of one or two members of her family."

It seems plain, from this experiment, that one is justified in the inference that coffee is an actual poison to many human beings and sets up all sorts of diseases. The remedy is plain enough—to abandon the coffee and use Postum Food Coffee, which is sold by all grocers at 15 and 25 cents a package.

Nickel-Steel for Boilers.

The results of recent experiments by Mr. F. A. Yarrow go to show that nickel-steel, which has proved so valuable for the armor of ships, is also an excellent material for boilers. The resistance of nickel-steel to the action of fire, of hydrochloric acid and of superheated steam, is far greater than is that of the mild steel of which boilers are ordinarily constructed. Mr. Yarrow estimates that a boiler furnished with nickel-steel tubes would last two or three times as long as an ordinary boiler. There would also be a saving in weight, but the cost would be increased.

His Face Value.

Fond Wife—I am sorry Adolphus did not shave the morning he so mysteriously disappeared.

Mamma—Why, my dear?

Fond Wife—He would certainly be recognized by the accompanying cuts.

A Note From the Editor.

Yes, Beatrice, of your poem
We will tell you, since you ask it;
It is here, and now reposes
In a pretty wicker basket.

A LITTLE COMEDY.

It was a gala night at the little uptown theater, and all Harvard had turned out in honor of the annual benefit of Nellie Ward, the reigning idol of the town, the daintiest laughing blonde that ever graced the boards. The house was raised flowers, and enthusiasm was at its height. During a temporary lull in the performance Robert Winthrop found his way behind the scenes and secured a fleeting tete-a-tete with the heroine of the hour. The girl was flushed and radiant, her pure loveliness heightened by the unwonted excitement of the occasion; yet there was a moody flash in his eye as he regarded her.

"Nell, was the promise you made me one day a myth or an honest pledge for the future? On such a night as this I doubt and wonder was I dreaming."

"Robert Winthrop"—and for an instant the laughing blue eyes lightened with anger —"do you begrudge me my little hour of triumph? I have earned it, believe me, and what is more fleeting than fame and the applause of the hour? It is a simple attack of jealousy."

"Nell, I am in earnest. Matters are coming to a climax at home, and it is only a question of time when I break loose from family control. Though I forfeit a fortune, I will be my own master, and for your dear sake what sacrifice would I not make? But first of all, I must know your mind."

"You may know it and welcome," and she turned on him in a spirited fashion. "Once for all, let me close the open rupture with your people on my account. I will enter no home unwelcomed."

"And you?" asked he bitterly. "Ah, Nell—I might have known the end of it all—dreams and delusions."

"I did not promise to marry you under the rose, and on no account will I embroil you with your family."

"Yet you have led me on from day to day with fair smiles and false promises."

"Rob, Rob"—and she laid her little hand on his arm instead—"Are you going to have a quarrel with me tonight, when I am so happy? Wait, wait—and all will untangle itself. Why, summer is coming; go on a yachting trip with some friends, and forget it all."

"Forget," impetuously. "Nell, you have never known love, if you can counsel me such a thing."

"Nell" and a strange smile flitted across her features—the face then at a burst of music from the orchestra she pushed him from her and ran down the stage, with a laughing "good night," and a moment later he heard the storm of applause that greeted her entrance.

But his box remained vacant for the rest of the evening.

It was the loveliest hour of the twenty-four, the meeting of sunset and moonrise; the lapsing tide still glowed and palpitated with rose and amber hints, while the young moon, like a drawn scimitar, gleamed bright above the shimmering sea. Mrs. Winthrop sat on the balcony of her summer villa and watched the evening lights kindling along the darkened coast, and then turned with a sigh to her girlish companion.

"Dear madam, what troubles you?"

"Lucie, I was thing of Robert, my son; when will he come again? Two whole months he has been sailing about in his yacht, with never a thought of me. We parted in anger, but I will not permit the boy to wreck his life while any show of authority is left to me."

Strange, child, how I have given my confidence since you came to me this summer, but my heart was full, and you are sympathetic beyond any one I have ever known. Robert will be ever cutlive this mad infatuation? I know well that opposition is a fatal element in a love affair, but I could not countenance a mistake of that sort. A social success at home is for—conceive of it, my dear; ever has a Winthrop so far descended in the social scale."

Have you ever seen the girl?" falteringly.

"Never. I do not frequent theaters. Robert has strange Bohemian tastes, and they have led him into dangerous ways. No doubt she is a siren, as they all are."

"Dear madam, you should not condemn the poor girl unheard. She probably plays for a livelihood. We can not all be born to the purple of idleness."

"Lucie, you mistake. It is not that. Were she merely poor as you, my child, I should not feel the shame, but an actress—"

"An actress may have a heart."

"Lucie," with emphasis, "I trust not. There lies my hope, and I confess it. Marriage with a Winthrop must prove a temptation to a girl of that class, but when once she realizes that it means poverty and social ostracism she will throw him over without a pang. Better a few months of heartbreak for the poor boy than the mistake of a lifetime."

Silence reigned for a few moments, then hurrying footsteps came up the stairs and on the balcony. Mrs. Winthrop sprang up, crying, "My son!" Lucie slipped from the hammock with a startled air and for a space all was confusion. Robert's moody recklessness of the morning seemed to have slipped from him and his mother's heart bled for him when he announced his intention of staying at the villa the remainder of the season.

At the earliest opportunity Lucie had passed into the house, leaving mother and son alone. But long ere this Mrs. Winthrop had retired for the night, she stepped out for a moment in search of a missing shawl, caught the glow of a cigar in the dusk, hesitated, and then yielded to the temptation.

"Nell, what comedy is this you are playing? Have you no heart? Can you do it all mean?"

"Hush, Robert," besechingly. "You will betray all."

"I will, indeed; where have you been hiding away all summer? I sought for you vainly at the close of the season."

"Robert, I have been in your home for the last two months; your mother's companion."

"A companion—you"—scornfully. "What would the world say? It shall not last another day."

"Rob, Rob," and she put out an imploring hand. "Promise me that you will keep silence for a time. I had a motive in coming; don't ruin all and place me in the role of an impostor."

"Nell, I will make no promises, but I shall remain at the house the rest of the summer, and act as seems to me right and fitting in the circumstances."

True to his word, he lingers on through the long summer days, watching, hoping the end, and trusting to time, and propinquity, to bring about a reconciliation with all the rest. Never before has she been guilty of matrimonial scheming, but her fears and forebodings have wrought a revolution in that proud nature; could the sweetness of the girlish face and the love light in her eyes depart from its past allegiance she would gladly overlook all other claims to her name.

Robert can never reconcile himself to the little comedy she is playing without his comment, and sometimes at any moment to force the situation.

And finally conscience has awakened under the kind and almost motherly treatment of Mrs. Winthrop, and she is all unworthy of the confidence reposed in her, and each day renders confession the more difficult; but the hour comes, becomes so frightened by the situation that she would fain take refuge in cowardly flight, but again her carelessness nature asserts itself, and she throws caution to the winds, and returns Robert to a happier mood, and they sail away from a One evening she sits alone in the little balcony and watch the great white moon climb slowly above the dark waters of the gray sea.

The girl has a rarely sweet mezzo soprano with a certain sympathetic thrill in it that goes straight to the heart; as she sings the words from one song to another Mrs. Winthrop is much moved.

"What a girl she is," she murmured. "Robert, my son, could this be your choice, I would make him mine own; one might search the world over and fail to find a lovelier nature."

"Mother," and he caught her hand in an eager clasp, "you really mean it—you consent!"

At that moment Nell stepped out on the balcony. "Well," he cried, with a joyous light in his voice. "Mother has given the consent I dared not ask!"

"Ah, Robert, you have learned to love her then, thanks to the old lady's diplomacy."

"Yes, mother, I have loved her long and deeply."

But as she leaned forward to kiss the speechless girl Nell recoiled from her embrace. "No, Robert, no, dear madam, I cannot accept this confession, and then condemn me if you will."

"Your confession?" in bewilderment.

In vain Robert laid a protesting hand on her arm, imploring her with his glance. "I will; if I forfeit all by my confession. Dear madam, now that I am not the modest, lowly companion whom you have known and loved all summer. I am an impostor, an innocent one, it may be, but an impostor, all the same."

"Rush, my child," in a strange, startled tone. "To me you have been a faithful friend. I care nothing for the secrets of your past."

"Listen to me, dear madam," she panted, feeling her courage fast ebbing away. "I—I am Nellie Ward—the actress your son hooed with his love."

"No, no—I will not believe it."

Still the pleading voice went on, while the lover's face flushed and paled, and Mrs. Winthrop hardened to sternness as the truth was borne in upon her.

I noted upon impulse when first I came to you, I said I will know and win the mother of the man I love. She will not come to me, but I will go to her, and then some day, when she has learned to love me for my own sake, I will make my confession. I—I can say no more," her voice broke, and she sank down by her lover's side, her face in her hands.

Silence followed this broken speech and when Mrs. Winthrop spoke again it was in slow, measured tones, that chilled the heart of her hearers.

"You have laid seige to a mother's heart—betrayed her most sacred confidence. You have conspired against me"—she flashed forth, with growing fire and resentment—"I will be your willing dupe of your deep designs."

"No, dear madam," pleadingly. "It was all my doing, and the punishment shall be mine alone."

"Never will I believe in truth or innocence again," she began, but the girl detected the wavering of her voice, caught her hands to her lips and kissed them.

"Go away"—sternly. "Ah, child, how I have loved you, what hopes I have cherished this summer," and then, yielding to impulse, she put her arms about the kneeling figure and burst into tears.

"I do believe in you, child," she sobbed, "and I forgive the deception that has taught me a much needed lesson."

And the lovers clasped hands in the darkness, with hearts to full to speak.

Her True Character.

"Yes," said a noted detective, "I have seen a great many queer things in my experience.

"Discovered a good many gigantic frauds, I suppose?" ventured an admirer.

"Well, I should say so," was the reply. "But between you and me, the most complete piece of deception I ever saw was a pretty young girl, and I would have sworn, an angel."

"But she wasn't?"

"I should say not. She has a temper like a whirlwind, and when she gets wild the very earth seems to shake."

"Good gracious! And how did you manage to discover her true character?"

"Well, I—ahem! 'She fact is, I married her!"

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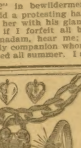

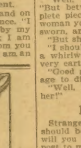

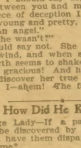

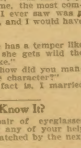

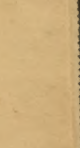

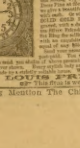

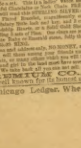

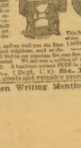

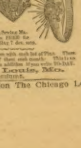

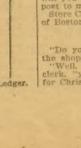

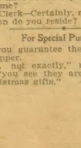

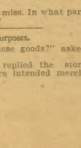

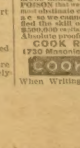

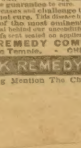

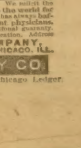

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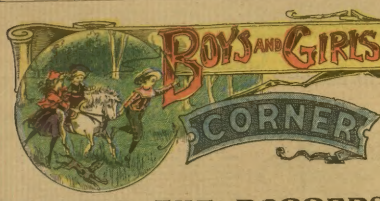

TRACING THE ROBBERS.

A Story of Dick Dart the Young Wall Street Detective---Twenty Million Dollars in Bonds the Prize.

by CAPTAIN RAVILL PINKERTON.

[Copyrighted, 1900.]

Begun in No. 7, February 17. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back numbers can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER IV—Continued.

Although he had lost his man, Dick Dart was by no means disheartened.

The case was still young.

He dismissed his cab and entering a well-appointed cafe procured a hearty supper.

When he paid his bill he entered into conversation with the clerk, and made several inquiries concerning the resort known as the White Rabbit.

"It's a shady resort, a few blocks east of here," said the clerk. "I can't give you the exact location."

"Who runs it?"

"Harney Noyes, the ex-prize fighter."

"He's a regular bruiser, ain't he?"

"Just try him and see," smiled the clerk.

"Thanks, not this eve," laughed Dick Dart.

A little later he paid a hasty visit to a theatrical costumer's establishment.

Here he procured several disguises.

He came out looking quite a Bowery spout.

It was now dark and the Bowery was alive with a gay crowd.

Dick Dart walked over in the direction of the White Rabbit.

It was situated on a side street.

On one side was a tall brick factory, and on the other a narrow alley leading to some tenements.

Before entering the saloon Dick made up his mind to do a little spying around.

He entered the alley.

Back of the saloon was a room in which card playing usually went on.

The window to this room was in an angle of the alley.

Dick crawled up to it and peered inside.

Two men were at a table, drinking and playing cards.

One man looked to be quite respectable.

The other was a regular east side tough.

Suddenly the better-looking man shoved the cards back.

"I don't want to play any more," he said. "I've had enough."

"What's the matter with you, Higgins?" growled the tough.

"I've spent enough over the game, Casey."

"Git out wid yer. Come, put up dat twenty in yer vest pocket."

"I don't care to, I pay."

"Ah, you're afraid," sneered the tough.

"Maybe I am—of you," was the sharp reply.

Before another word could be said the tough got up and knocked the other man down.

Then he leaped on him and grabbed him by the throat.

"Let up, Casey!" gasped the man on his back. "Wha—what does this mean?"

"It means I want dat two hundred dollars in yer breast pocket, see?" hissed the tough. "Fork over now, and don't yer dare to cry for help, or I'll squeeze der wind out of yer."

"This—this is downright robbery!"

"Wot do I care? You blokes from der fashionable quarter can't expect to do de east side without payin' for it. Fork over dat money at once, or I'll do yer, see?"

And the tough increased his pressure on his victim's windpipe.

CHAPTER V.

DICK DART A PRISONER.

Dick Dart listened with great interest to the quarrel going on in the back room of the resort known as the White Rabbit.

He saw at once how matters stood.

The good looking man on the floor was one of the better class of New Yorkers.

In some manner he had fallen in with the tough and had been persuaded to take in life on the east side.

The tough had won part of the man's money at cards, and now he wanted to rob him of the balance.

The man on the floor was having decidedly the worst of the encounter.

The tough was slowly but surely choking him to death.

He tried to cry out again, but in vain.

"I can't stand this," said the young millionaire detective to himself.

The window was partly open.

With a quick movement Dick threw it open still further and leaped into the back room.

The tough did not see him coming.

Dick Dart grabbed him by the collar.

An instant later Casey went sailing half way across the room.

His head came in contact with the edge of the table and he uttered a yell of pain.

"Hully gee!"

"Thank heaven, help is at hand!" gasped the man on the floor.

"You miserable coward!" cried Dick Dart turning upon the tough. "What were you going to do?"

"Wot business is dat of yours?" retorted Casey.

"A good deal of my business," said Dick Dart, with a regular Bowery swagger, for it must be remembered he was in disguise. "This gent is a friend of mine, ain't that so, Mr. Higgins?"

And he tipped the man a wink.

"Certainly you are my friend," was the ready reply, and the man told the exact truth, for he looked upon Dick as the "friend in need."

"Who are you?" growled Casey.

He was a bad egg and had done time up at Blackwell's Island on several occasions.

"Barry Lords of the Tenth ward," replied Dick, promptly.

"Barry Lords!"

"Maybe you think you know every man in New York," said Dick, sarcastically.

He turned to Higgins.

"Did this man swindle you out of anything?"

"He—he won some money at cards, I think unfairly. But I am willing to let that go," was Oscar Higgin's reply.

His one thought was to get away from the resort.

He had seen all he wanted to see of the lower side of east side life.

"All right, you had better skip out," replied Dick, in a high tone.

And he nodded toward the window.

"But you'll follow me?" faltered Higgins.

"I can take care of myself. Go before this fellow calls some of his pals."

Thoroughly alarmed, Oscar Higgins waited to hear no more.

He ran for the window and clambered out.

"Stop!" yelled the tough.

His spring forward, to go sprawling on his face.

Dick Dart had tripped him up.

Before with a bound he leaped to his feet.

"I don't know who yer are, but I'll do yer for dat trip," he cried.

And drawing a big blackjack from his pocket, he made at the young millionaire detective.

"Back!"

The tough advanced but a few feet.

He brought up suddenly in the face of a pistol held in Dick Dart's hand.

"Hully gee!"

"Drop that blackjack!"

"Don't shoot!"

"Drop that blackjack!"

"I wasn't goin' to hit yer. I was only foolin'."

"Drop it, or I'll——"

Thun! The blackjack dropped to the floor.

"There that's better."

"You've got me."

"I have to be in dealing with such chaps as you."

"Where did you come from?"

"In through the window."

"Yer caught me foul. I must say."

"Tarry 'don't go with me," replied Dick Dart.

He was puzzled what to do next.

"Casey, you hang out here a good deal, don't you?" he asked.

"Dat's so."

"Who hangs out here with you?"

"Nobody."

"Well, who hangs around here with Barney Noyes?"

"Oh, lots of sports."

"Name them."

Ah well as he was able the tough did so.

Nothing was mentioned of Rockmore and Longback Phil.

"Who yer lookin' fer?" asked the tough, curiously.

"A fellow with a long back."

Instantly Dick realized the man he had been following from the elevated station.

Casey's eyes brightened.

"I seen him talking to Noyes about an hour ago," he cried.

"Where?"

"Upstairs. I went up ter bring down some change fer the barkeeper."

"Were the longback and Noyes alone?"

"No; dere was annuder fellow wid 'em."

"What kind of a lookin' chap?"

"A chunky feller wid red hair."

Dick Dart knew that could not be Rockmore.

It might possibly be one of the other bond robbers.

"What were they talking about?"

"Some boodle."

"Did you hear much of what was said?"

Casey was about to reply when two men burst into the room from a side door.

Both carried pistols, which were at once leveled at Dick Dart's head.

"Hands up, young man, or we'll bore you through!" said the leader of the pair.

It was Longback Phil, the bond robber.

Dick Dart was taken by surprise and was a prisoner.

CHAPTER VI.

PUT TO TORTURE.

"Hands up!"

Dick Dart wheeled about.

He saw instantly how he was trapped.

"Cross the window, Casey!" ordered the second man.

It was Barney Noyes, the ex-prize fighter, and owner of the resort.

Casey at once jumped to do as he was bidden.

Dick Dart's pistol had been restored to his pocket.

He had been taken off his guard.

He saw it would be useless to resist.

The rascals would have shot him down where he stood.

His hands went up slowly over his head.

At this Longback Phil laughed.

"I see you know how to mind," he laughed.

"Yes, I learned it when I was on the farm," drawled Dick.

"No joking, please. You are not what you pretend to be, sonny."

"No?"

"Nixy. You are a detective, and the very one who has been following me for the past few hours."

"A detective?" growled Barney Noyes.

"That's straight, Barney."

"We ought to do him!" growled the ex-prize fighter.

"Oh, we'll take care of him all right."

The two men whispered together a moment.

Then Casey was sent out of the room.

He came back in a short while, bringing with him a rope and handcuffs.

While the two men continued to cover Dick, Casey bound his hands and feet.

Then Longback Phil made sure that the bonds were properly adjusted.

Dick Dart was thrown on his back and a gag was thrust into his mouth.

It was quite effective.

Out in the main saloon a noisy crowd were having an entertaining time.

Not one suspected what was going on in the rear.

"Where shall we take him?" asked Longback Phil.

"Pick him up and I'll show you," replied Barney Noyes.

The bond robber and Casey the tough did so.

The keeper of the White Rabbit opened the side door and passed into a narrow entry.

Not far away was another door, leading to the cellarway.

Down a pair of dirty steps Dick Dart was carried.

Then Barney Noyes turned upon Casey.

"Skip it, Casey," he said. "And mind you never tell a word of this to any one, or you'll not have a chance to work around here any longer."

(Continued on page fourteen.)

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Youthful Bounty Claimants.

Among the first applicants for wolf bounties in North Dakota, under the new bounty act which became a law in that state in the winter of 1898-99, were two mere tots of children, Rose and Custer Foulkrod, who made their appearance at the house of the county treasurer one morning only three weeks after the law went into effect.

Rose, the elder, is but eleven years of age, and Custer only nine or ten, and they looked even younger. The children are not brother and sister. Rose appears to be wholly, or in part, of Indian descent, and is a waif adopted in the Foulkrod family several years ago. Custer, on the other hand, is a bright, sandy-haired little fellow, who gave direct answers to all questions put to him. His father, he said, had "gone for a soldier," and his mother was at her early home in Indiana; but "Grandpa and Grandma Hogan" were at their sod house on the North Fork, eleven miles distant. The children had come from there that morning.

When first seen, at about seven o'clock, they were sitting in front of the treasurer's and their clothing was far from warm or abundant. They had wrapped themselves in three worn old blankets, and had a large, rickety good box at their backs. Rose was sitting straight as a stick, her black eyes fixed on the house windows; she scarcely spoke at all, and declined to go into the house, after the treasurer had invited them to enter, but watched his face closely. It was the boy who did the talking. He said that they had come to "get the bounty," so that they could "go to the store and buy grub stuff."

"Bounty on what?" the treasurer asked them.

"Wolfses," said the boy. "Five wolfses and a lion and a kiyote."

"But have you the proof—the hides or scalps with the tails?" the treasurer asked.

"Yep," replied the boy, in a business tone. Jumping nimbly over the goods box, he hauled out from it five wolf pelts, a coyote hide, and a small mountain lion skin—all fresh.

The wolfskins were those of the large, gray timber-wolf, a formidable and destructive brute which inflicts deplorable losses on the stockmen of the counties west of the Missouri, bordering the Black Hills. The new bounty law provides that three dollars shall be paid by county treasurer for each gray wolf scalp or hide, a like sum for a mountain lion, and one dollar for a coyote.

But satisfactory evidence must be presented that the animals were killed within the county or state, and it is the treasurer's duty, on payment, to punch a hole not less than half an inch in diameter in each ear of every skin, to prevent "repeating." The skin, thus marked, is returned to the person presenting it, who can sell it if he wishes. It is expected also that the owners of cattle and sheep ranches will pay a bounty to those who destroy wolves and panthers, in addition to that paid by the state.

To prevent fraud, the county officers are obliged to use vigilance and in this instance the treasurer's suspicion was that the children had been sent to him by some one who had brought the skins into the state from Nebraska or Wyoming.

"Where did you get these hides?" he asked.

"Off'n wolfses," replied the lad.

"Yes, but who killed them?"

The boy eyes searched the treasurer's. "Grandpa Hogan made pills for 'em," he replied, as if conceding something unwillingly, "but her and me ketched 'em," he added, stoutly, indicating his companion with a nod.

"How old a man is your grandfather?" the treasurer asked, incredulously.

"He's most eighty, grandpa is, and it took him most all the forenoon every time to get to skin 'em."

"Look here, you must tell me the truth about this," said the treasurer, severely.

"I'm tellin' you the truth," replied the boy, with clear-eyed honesty. "Her and me ketched 'em, and grandpa made pills for 'em, for us."

"But tell me how you caught these wolves," exclaimed the treasurer, still unconvinced.

"We ketched 'em in the shack."

"What shack? Where?"

"Grandpa's old shack, where he used to live, on t'other side of the crick."

"Yes, but how did you catch wolves in this shack?" questioned the treasurer. "How came the wolves in the shack?"

"They went in to get the hoss head and the after bones."

"Bones that you put there for bait? But what kept the wolves from coming out?"

The boy explained that "her"—meaning Rose, whose black eyes blinked rapidly when the treasurer looked at her—had made a kind of spring catch from dry ash wood and a leather string, attached to which was a stone for a weight. The door of the shack, or small log shanty, was left ajar about ten inches, so that a wolf, "lion," or any other creature, approaching the empty structure, could put its head in and look about the interior.

To all appearance the door was unfastened, swinging free, and the wolf or other wild beast was not alarmed by anything that it saw either within or without. To get the bones it had but to walk in; yet when it did so, the larger part of its body pushed the door back a little further, and the ashen spring at the top, bending slightly, released the weight attached to the spring. Then—as the creature's body passed in—the door was pulled to with just sufficient force to latch it. The animal was thus entrapped and all so quietly that it scarcely felt any alarm at first.

How the girl had learned so cunning a stratagem was not explained; perhaps from her Indian mother. There was very little to it of gear or mechanism, and nothing whatever in the way of metal; otherwise it would have failed, since it is now almost impossible to take these wolves in steel traps, or even in log traps such as white hunters sometimes construct.

Yet to this primitive device, contrived by the hand of an eleven-year-old child, five large gray wolves had, one after another, fallen victims. Two, indeed, had been entrapped at once, the second having apparently pushed into the shack with the first.

The shack itself was simply a little low log house without windows, and having a sod roof. When once the door had swung to and latched behind the beast, it was a prisoner.

By the time the boy had explained it and told how the spring and weight were adjusted, the treasurer became convinced of his truthfulness. He brought out his punch and hammer, and proceeded to make holes in the ears of the skins, as by law directed, while little Rose eyeing his every movement with attention to details.

"How did you know when you had caught a wolf?" the treasurer asked.

"Her went up to look every morning," said the boy.

"What did you do when you found you had a wolf?" the treasurer asked the girl; but she only blinked half a dozen times in a second, and it was still the boy who replied for her that she ran home to get Grandpa Hogan to "make a pill" for it.

The old man had been a wolf hunter in his day, and knew that to shoot a wolf inside the shack would spoil all chance of trapping another there. He enclosed enough strychnine to kill a wolf in a bit of tallow, the size of a hen's egg. This the children carried to the shack and pushed through a chink between the logs, and after they had gone the wolf's hunger soon did the rest.

Toward evening the two small hunters

(Continued on page fifteen.)

Hauling it home in triumph.

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Tracing the Robbers.

(Continued From Page Twelve.

Barney Noyes' word was law among the gang.

Without a word of protest Casey left the cellar and went up to the saloon for a drink.

Then Arhald Higgins would come back with help, he walked away to another favorite hang-out.

"There is the coal vault," said Noyes to Longback Phil. "He won't be able to escape from that if we lock him in."

"All right. But take the gag from his mouth first; I want to question him."

The gag was removed.

Longback Phil had lit a lantern and this he now flashed into the young detective's face.

"Who are you?" he asked, sharply.

"A detective."

"Your name?"

"It might be Smith."

"Answer me."

The bond robber gave Dick a nasty kick in the ribs.

Still Dick did not answer.

"Will you tell me your name?"

"No."

"Stubborn, eh? I'll make you talk."

Taking a match from his pocket, Longback Phil lit it.

Then he applied the flame to Dick Dart's ear.

"Now speak," he commanded. "Speak, or I'll burn off your ear."

The pain was intense.

Dick Dart jerked his ear away.

"No, you don't," cried the bond robber. "Hold him, Barney!"

With a grim of delight the keeper of the resort complied.

By this time the match had gone out.

Calmly Longback Phil proceeded to light another.

It looked as if Dick Dart must either speak or suffer the most excruciating pain.

"You think yourself brave, but I'll tame you," remarked the bond robber.

Again he applied the burning match to Dick's ear.

The skin was beginning to burn.

Ring-a-ling-a-ling!

It was a bell overhead.

"Stop it!" cried Barney Noyes.

"What does that ringing mean?" asked Longback Phil.

"It's the barkeeper's signal. Something is wrong in the saloon."

Then came another ring.

"Heave him in the vault and lock the door," went on Noyes.

This was hastily done.

Dick Dart landed on his back on a heap of coal and was left in utter darkness.

He heard the two men leave the cellar and then followed silence, saving for the faint tramp of feet in the saloon over the cellar.

For several minutes the young detective could think of nothing but the pain in his ear.

He could not get at the spot with either hand, and so had to suffer.

After a while the pain ceased to a large degree.

An hour went by and nobody came near the coal vault.

Dick Dart began to work at the rope which bound him.

It was not long before he had one hand free.

He was at work on the other hand when he heard a noise outside.

A moment later the door to the vault was unlocked and thrown open.

Barney Noyes stood in the opening, lighted lantern in hand.

Still as we left him, I reckon," he muttered to himself.

Then he came closer to make a more thorough inspection.

He bent over Dick Dart.

Scarcely had he done so than the young detective caught him in his young but muscular arms.

Noyes was upset.

The lantern was dashed to the stone flooring and went out, leaving the ex-prize fighter and Dick Dart to grapple in the dark.

CHAPTER VII.

DICK DART SHOWS HIS MUSCLE.

The ex-prize fighter had the advantage of the situation, for he was entirely free so far as his body went, while Dick Dart still had his feet and one hand tied.

But as Noyes came down Dick Dart struggled viciously to get on top of him.

This the young millionaire detective succeeded in doing, and a moment later slipped free his other hand.

"Darn you!" hissed Noyes.

He had not expected an attack and was taken entirely off his guard.

He made a clutch at Dick, but the young detective squirmed out of his reach.

Then Dick Dart stumbled over something.

It was the lantern, a heavy brass-bound affair.

He picked it up and stood on his feet.

"I'll have yer life for this!" howled Barney Noyes.

All the hatred in his nature was aroused.

He leaped on Dick and let out a corking blow with his fist.

Dick Dart dodged.

Then around came the heavy lantern.

The swinging blow landed on Barney Noyes' left temple.

It made a deep gash and the ex-prize fighter went down with a groan.

Dick Dart had knocked him out.

The young detective stood on guard a moment, and then seeing Noyes did not move, he set down the lantern and freed his feet.

The glass on the lantern had been smashed into a thousand pieces, but otherwise the affair was all right and Dick lit it to survey the situation.

Noyes was unconscious.

As he lay in that state, Dick Dart bound him as he himself had been tied up.

"Now, then," he murmured to himself. Then, nursing his burned ear, he waited for Noyes' return to his senses.

It was not long before the keeper of the resort opened his eyes.

"Who—who struck me?" he gasped.

"I did," replied Dick. "Now keep quiet." Noyes looked bewildered, and then glared savagely at the young detective.

"You think yourself brave," he said.

"Where is Longback Phil?" was Dick's question.

"None of your business."

"Want your ear burned, Noyes?"

The ex-fighter grew wilsed.

"No, no!"

"Then answer me."

"He is not here."

"Gone away?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"I don't know."

Dick Dart brought out a match and lit it. He did not mean to burn Noyes' ear, only to scare him.

"Don't, don't! I'll tell you all!" shrieked the fighter. "He's the Rabbit, in terror.

"Where has he gone?"

"Over to Jersey City."

"To what place?"

"To a resort on Grand street, I don't know the number, but it ain't many blocks from the ferry."

"Who is with him?"

"I don't know."

"I don't know; I swear I don't!"

"Did they bring the stuff here?"

"No."

"Who had it?"

Rockmore and Zyler took it away this afternoon. I don't know where they placed it."

"And you don't know the number of that place on Grand street, in Jersey city?"

"No; but it's a brick house, with one window on each of a second-story window."

"Who said so?"

"Rockmore. He was telling Bloomon how to find the place."

"How long are they going to stay at the rendezvous?"

"Till tomorrow only."

"And then?"

"I don't know what they are going to do after that. Say?"

"Well?"

"You ought to give me my liberty after telling you so much."

"Not just yet, Noyes."

Dick Dart felt that no time was to be lost.

It was after midnight, and by morning the bond robbers would probably take flight for parts unknown.

No doubt they intended to meet in Jersey City to divide up their ill-gotten gains.

Still leaving Noyes tied up, Dick Dart locked the man in the coal vault.

Then he hunted around the cellar until he found a small window opening out upon the alley previously mentioned.

Through this window he crawled.

A few minutes later he was on the way to the nearest police precinct.

The officer in charge knew Dick Dart and was surprised to receive a visit from him at the time of night.

He was still more astonished when Dick told him he wanted Barney Noyes arrested and that the man was lying bound in the coal vault of the resort.

"I will make a charge against him," said Dick Dart. "Send around a couple of policemen to arrest him without delay."

The officer promised to do so, and two policemen were detailed for the work.

To one of them Dick gave the key of the coal vault.

Then he called a night cab.

"Drive me to the Pennsylvania railroad ferry at a rapid gait," he said, to the cabman.

Over the almost deserted streets they rattled, across Broadway and down Cortlandt street.

A boat was just preparing to leave for the other side of the river and Dick Dart was the last person to come aboard.

At this time of night travel on the ferryboats was light.

Dick Dart walked through the gentleman's cabin and then forward into the bow.

As he did this he passed two men who were seated smoking and talking earnestly in the forward cabin.

The two men were Rockmore and Longback Phil.

"By heavens, it is that accursed detective!" muttered Longback Phil. "How did he escape?"

"He must have downed Noyes," returned Jim Rockmore.

Dick did not notice the men.

He walked out on the front deck and found that it was entirely deserted.

All the other passengers were in the cabin, most of them asleep.

Swiftly the boat began to cross the dark and sluggish river.

Suddenly Longback Phil and Rockmore arose and whipped out revolvers.

Noiselessly they came up behind Dick Dart.

Longback Phil raised a sandbag over the young detective's head.

Down it came with terrible force.

The blow rendered Dick Dart unconscious.

"Good!" murmured Jim Rockmore. "Now over with him!"

The two bond robbers caught Dick up in their arms.

A second later and the unconscious form slid over the railing and fell into the river.

"He's a goner this trip," said Longback Phil. "But where's the bag? And already, the paddlewheel will finish him."

CHAPTER VIII.

A TERRIBLE ESCAPE.

Rockmore and Longback Phil were sure they had got rid of Dick Dart forever.

They ran below through the passengers for horses to the rear of the ferryboat.

Nothing was to be seen through the darkness of the night save the water.

"He's a goner, right enough," muttered Longback Phil.

"You're right. My, but he must have been a smart one to track us so quick."

"He was."

The two men returned to the cabin and lit fresh cigars.

They felt no qualms of conscience over what they had done.

All they cared for was to get every detective off their track.

They thought they were now safe, and that they could divide up the $20,000,000 in bonds at their leisure.

It was not long before the ferryboat ran into the slip on the Jersey City side.

The two bond robbers were the first men off the boat.

Watching carefully, in case anyone should be around to spot them, they left the ferryhouse and hurried off up the nearest street.

It was exactly 3 o'clock in the morning.

In the meanwhile, how had Dick Dart really fared?

Was it true the two villains had sent him to his death?

The young detective, it must be confessed, was taken completely by surprise.

He had not dreamed of any of the gang being on the boat.

He remembered what the officer in charge at the Central office had told him—that every railroad and boat station was being watched—and he had imagined that the crowd would go to Jersey City in some private craft.

The blow from the sandbag was a cruel one, and Dick was totally overcome.

When he came to he was struggling in the water.

A large amount of the salty fluid had gone down his throat.

The ferryboat had passed on, and he was left in the midst of the dark and rolling river.

How he had escaped being ground up by the paddlewheel he could not tell.

As a matter of fact, the boat had changed her course at the moment the young detective had been thrown over the side.

Dick Dart was so dizzy he could hardly think.

In a blind and bewildered way he struck out.

Far off were the lights on shore, which side of the river he could not tell.

Above, the heavens were still starry, was the first rational thought that coursed through his mind.

With all the strength at his command the young detective struck out for what looked to be nearest land at which he could reach.

Despite the weight of his clothing, he made good progress.

A distance of several hundred feet was gained when he heard a steady puff, puff, behind him.

He looked back.

A small steamship was plowing directly for him.

It looked for a moment as if he would be struck and killed.

With might and main he struggled to get out of the course of the tug.

Then he raised his voice.

"Help! help! help!"

On came the tug.

Had the crew heard?

Evidently not, for no effort was made to stop the craft.

She went on her way, passing Dick, with scarcely ten feet to spare.

Then all was dark away in the distance.

"Too bad!" thought the young millionaire detective.

Yet he was glad he had escaped being run down.

He continued to swim toward shore.

It was a long and a hard pull, and when within a dozen feet of a dock, he felt that he could not pull another stroke.

He reached up, however, and caught hold of a long rope floating on the surface of the current.

He pulled himself in by the rope, and came up under a long dock.

For fully a quarter of an hour he sat under the dock, trying to regain his strength.

"They think me dead," he reasoned. "Now I will have all the better chance to join them in a disguise."

Dick Dart had an idea by which he hoped he might land where the stolen bonds were before having the robbers taken into custody.

To arrest them and let the bonds slip through his fingers would never do.

When at last the start came he made his way to a hotel.

He had been in Jersey City and here had a friend whom he could trust.

It took half an hour to dry his clothing and then Dick Dart was disguised and in mind.

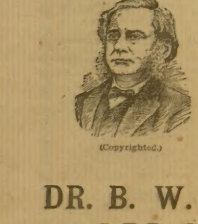
When he emerged on the street he was the exact counterpart of Barney Noyes, the keeper of the White Rabbit resort.

The transformation was a most wonderful and showed what skill the young millionaire had at his command.

"Now, to find the meeting place and work my little game," said Dick to himself as he left the hotel.

He hurried over to the lower end of Grand

MANLY VIGOR---NO DRUGS



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street and walked slowly along, on the watch for the house with one blind missing from a second-story window.

Several blocks were passed and then the house was spotted.

The two lower floors were dark, as was also the basement.

On the top floor a bright light was burning.

Dick wondered how he could get into the house.

He looked to his pistol.

It was in perfect order.

"Here goes," he said to himself.

Crossing the street, he ran up the steps of the house and boldly rang the bell.

At once the light upstairs was lowered, showing the men were on guard.

Then came soft footsteps down to the lower hall.

"Who is there?" came in a strange voice.

"Barney Noyes," returned Dick, promptly.

"Barney?" The door was hastily unlocked. "What brings you here?"

"News, my boy, news. Where is Rockmere and the others?"

"Upstairs. Come up, Barney."

Babe Zyler, for the man was that individual, led the way up two flights of stairs. Dick Dart followed.

They passed through a short hallway.

"It's all right; open the door!" called out Zyler.

Then the door of a room in front was thrown open, and the young detective entered the rendezvous of the bond robbers.

He was alone among his enemies, and a single false move might cost him his life.

This thrilling story of robbery and detective work will be continued next week. The Ledger's special announcement of free cameras and batteries appears on page thirteen and fifteen.

Mr. Shivvers Tries Heroic Treatment.

"U-m-m-m!" said Mr. Shivvers, thoughtfully, laying down his paper, "I believe there is something in that."

"In what?" asked Mrs. Shivvers.

"Why, in their Health Hints for the Helpless' they say that the reaction and afterglow of cold morning baths is an infallible cure for neuralgia and rheumatism," explained Mr. Shivvers.

"Cold water right out of the spigot, without any warm water at all?" cried Mrs. Shivvers.

"Certainly," replied Mr. Shivvers.

"Oo-o-oh! I couldn't," shuddered Mrs. Shivvers.

Mr. Shivvers smiled a superior smile.

"Of course, it is rather heroic treatment, and requires considerable moral as well as physical courage, but to a man convinced of its efficacy that is of no consequence," he said, complacently. "I certainly shall give it a fair trial. Besides," he continued, fortifying his sudden resolution, "it is not one sudden freezing plunge, but a gradual immersion while you very slowly count six. Like this, one, and you put in one foot; two, you put in the other; three, you sink upon one knee; four, you kneel on both; five, you plunge in your arms; and six, you immerse your body. So, after all, it is not so very dreadful. Yes, I shall certainly try it tomorrow morning."

However, Mr. Shivvers did not seem so enthusiastic in the morning. His wife let the cold water run, according to his instructions, until the tub was full to overflowing, but, in spite of reiterated information to that effect, he still lingered in bed.

"Jeremiah!" cried Mrs. Shivvers at last, from the bitrum, where she was doing up her hair, "this is the eleventh time I've called you, and you just must get up. You'll be late for breakfast as it is. You needn't try that bath if you are afraid of it," she added, with a laugh.

Slowly and reluctantly Mr. Shivvers crept out from under the warm covers, silently casting a look full of reproach upon his smiling spouse, and into the bath room with the laggard step of one who has something weighing upon his mind. Then there was a long, a very long wait. Nor was it until his wife had several times exhorted him to "Hurry up, Jeremiah!" that she heard him say:

"Oo-o-o-oo, Ouch! Gosh!"

Then there was another wait and another exhortation.

"T-t-t-t-t-twoooo. Ow-ow-ow-ow!"

Another wait and exhortation.

"Th-th-th-th-three e-e-e-e," next came chattering from the bath room, immediately followed by a blood-curdling shout and a tremendous splash. Then there was a succession of splashes, and what Mrs. Shivvers at first took for a streak of lightning flashed out of the bath tub, plunged into bed and rolled itself tightly up in the covers.

"Why, Jeremiah!" gasped Mrs. Shivvers.

Mr. Shivvers simply glared and shivered.

"Woman!" he growled, when he could control his chattering teeth, "did you leave that cake of soap in the bottom of the bath tub on purpose?"

Youthful Bounty Claimants.

(Continued from thirteenth page.)

were wont to return, and in no case had failed to find the wolf dead. They then opened the door, and attaching a bit of rope to the animal's hind legs, hauled it home in triumph.

Although to inform to go abroad in the snow, the old man was able to skin the wolves when brought to him.

The treasurer paid the children the handy money—sometimes dollars in all—and with an amused smile watched them drive to the store to buy "grub stuff," of which the forlorn family was no doubt in need. It was likely that they would be able to sell the skins for as much more, however, and the treasurer concluded that there was no immediate cause for alarm concerning the Fishbrods as long as they had little Rose to trap for them and Custer to do the talking.—Youth's Companion.

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Host—I don't.

Friend—But your portrait says, "Thomas Newrich—by himself."

Host—Well, ain't I by myself? There ain't nobody else around.

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES.

Don't.

I might have just a little fun
  If it wasn't for a word,
I'm sure the very baddest one
  As ever I have heard.
I hopes as it would go away,
  But I suppose it won't—
I fears as it will always stay,
  That dreadful word of "Don't."

It's "Don't you make the slightest noise,"
  And "Don't lie on the floor,"
And "Don't you break your pretty toys,"
  And "Don't you open the door,"
And "Don't you dare go near the press,"
  And "Don't you touch the cat,"
And "Don't you make your clothes a mess,"
  And "Don't do this and that."

I'm only six, but yet I've found
  There's nothing I would do
But what there's some one close around
  Has got a "Don't" or two.

The Wolf Slayer.

This incident I am about to tell happened in Michigan's early days, when the woods were filled with Indians, bears and wolves. A family named Standish moved from the east and settled in a wild place near which is now a large city. They had forced their way through an unbroken country, meeting with Indians and occasionally a settler, but at last had arrived at their homestead, tired and worn with their journey.

The family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Standish; Ned, aged 14; Nellie, aged 11, and Frank, a boy of 7, all of them sturdy and ready to stand the hardships of a new country. They had scarcely settled in their home before winter was upon them.

The children gradually overcame their fear of the Indians, and Ned could shoot and fish as well as the native boys. So when one year after they had been settled in their new home, the children did not feel afraid to stay alone when their parents received word to come to a distant settlement to visit a sick friend whom they had known in their old home. Mrs. Standish dreaded to leave the care of the house and stock to the children, but Nellie's hearty, "I can, mamma," and Ned's "don't worry about us," caused them to start at once. Mr. Standish told Ned to keep good watch of the sheep, as the neighbors' flocks had been disturbed by wolves.

The children were a little lonely at night, as children are likely to be. Nellie had covered the coals with ashes and had tucked little Frank in bed, while Ned had put the oxen in the log stable and turned the sheep in the enclosure near the house, thinking they could better care for them should the wolves come. In the middle of the night Ned awoke with a start, thinking he had heard some animal pass his window. He listened and again heard the clatter of feet on the frozen ground coming nearer and nearer, past the stable where Star and Bright, the oxen, were lowing in fright. By this time Nellie and Frank were awake and badly frightened, but Ned, telling them not to be afraid, took down his father's rifle and shot by the dim light of a candle. There was an awful silence and Ned was afraid to see what he had done. The rest of the night passed in quiet.

In the morning, to Ned's surprise, one of his father's finest sheep lay on the ground dead, with a basket of frozen potatoes around his neck. In one corner of the fence Ned had placed them the day before. The sheep, in running, had put its head in the basket, and Ned's first shot brought him to the ground.

The children were greatly distressed over the thought of what their father would say, but they frankly told the whole story when they arrived home, and, although Mr. Standish greatly regretted the loss of his sheep, he praised Ned for his bravery for attacking what he supposed to be a wolf.

Mother Ducks.

The wild duck is apt to be rather queer as a mother. She often seems to have the most strange ideas about good places for the nursery.

It is necessary for the well-being of her babies that the nursery should be close by the water's side, for the little ones like to take to the water as soon as hatched. They have small use for the land except to rest on and they are rather restless. The water is their element, and yet the old mother duck will sometimes choose for her nestling place a spot more than 100 yards from any water; sometimes she will even choose the pollard willow, and how she conveys her young brood to the water is one of those problems of natural history which, like the cuckoo's way of getting her egg into a wren's nest, will probably go on vexing till the end of time.

Often she will make her nest or lay her eggs in a spot that has no cover. And yet no one can say that she is not an affectionate, even an over-anxious, mother. When you come near her nest and startle her off it she does not go away, as a wise woman would, stealthily, secretly, so as not to reveal to you its existence, but with a flutter and a commotion and often with an affection of a broken wing (as if to lead you off in pursuit of her rather than leave you looking for her eggs), that tells you as plainly as if she had quacked it out: "I have a nest there; please do not go looking for it, but come and catch me; I have a broken wing."

She has only too many reasons for her over-anxiety. It is quite pitiful. She is a pitiful object herself, as she goes about in her lame fashion. But the real dangers that menace her young family are many and terrible. On shore, as soon as hatched, or even while still in the shell, they are the most attractive prey of rats, both gray rats and water voles, and no sooner do they take to the water than a hungry pike is looking out to gobble them up, or a heron is not at all above skewering one of them on his boyonet beak if it should come his way. So all these causes for anxiety more than excuse Mother Duck for her fussiness, even if there be no excuse for her habit of pitching her nursery tent in places that really do not seem good at first sight.

ALONE AND FORSAKEN.

Johnny, the Elephant—I wonder why nobody wants to skate near me! I'm just as sociable as any one!

A Wise Youngster.

"You should be more careful of your toys, Johnny," said a mother to her small son. "Look at Willie Brown; he seldom breaks any of his."

"Yes," replied the wise youngster, "and that's why he don't get half as many new ones as I do."

Bobby Wasn't Selfish.

"I want Bobby to take some medicine now. Will he take it like a good boy?"

"Es, mother. Is it nice?"

"Yes, very nice."

"Does oo like it, mother?"

"Yes, very much."

"Then oo d'ink it, mother, 'nstead of me. Bobby not selfish 'ittle boy."

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